

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## THE CARDINAL'S PAWN.

### CHAPTER XXII.

FOR more minutes than were prudent, the Englishman stood with folded arms, looking down on the dead woman lying on the bed where he had laid her. The first moment had shown him that the cruel wound was past praying for; but he had drawn out the dagger on which the blood of husband and wife had met by the grim chance, and wiped off the blood oozing over the rosy lights of the marriage-mantle that had turned to a shroud. His search for the murderer had been in vain, though as he tramped in hot chase up and down the stairs, he passed and re-passed eyes glimmering from a niche in the wall originally designed for some statue. The dwarf harbouring there looked down in perplexity on the stranger who was not Bonaventuri, but he laid by the puzzle for his mistress's keener wits.

Talbot bent at last to draw the straight folds of the wedding veil over the face with its closed eyes, and the hands crossed below the little crown left on her bosom. He straightened himself with a sigh. "I can serve you best by bringing my sweetheart to happiness," he muttered, "though I would keep even her waiting for an hour if I could send your murderer to his account."

The niche was empty when he

passed it again on his way into the street. He had taken precaution to wash his scratches and arrange his dress, and the morning-cry of the bakers calling on the women to knead their bread told him that the streets were deserted by midnight frolickers and that the tide of daily occupation had not turned from its ebb. The sun was rising as Talbot lay, feeling his exhaustion, in a gondola, whose oarsman showed little surprise at the bidding to row for the Ghetto. In the licence of decadent Venice, Jewish girls were as popular ornaments on Christian balconies as parrots or Barbary apes.

"Your purse should be heavy enough to sink the gondola, *signore*," he ventured, poling swiftly along the opaline ripples. "Or have you a pass for a sop to the barges watching the Ghetto night and day?"

"The Jews can turn lead into gold, I hear," returned Talbot drily. "Perhaps their gaolers may have been so far infected with their wisdom as to be able to turn gold into the parchment that passes are written on."

"The thing's to be done," nodded the other. "My cousin has a wife's brother on the barges, and he says—of course it's secret as confession, *signore*—'tis as fat a place as beneath the spit turning a larded goose! But the heavy purse must travel on with his Excellency within the Ghetto,

whether he has an eye for any one damsel, or his mouth merely made up for any pair of gazelle eyes and slender brown ankles."

"What would you advise in the case?"

"I, *signore*? I should steer for the marriage-broker. He has girls good and cheap; cheap, that is, for the Hebrews, who would drive a bargain for a gnawed bone with a starving man. The Jews say the price of their women is above rubies, and by San Todaro and his crocodile's snout they make the Christians pay the price! But the broker, men say, buys up orphan girls with no families to hold them dear."

Talbot was silent, relieved by the experience of the gondolier's cousin's brother-in-law as to the difficulty he had imagined in entering the Ghetto. A faint sickening odour tainting the fresh wind had hung about him for some moments before; with an impatient exclamation he changed his seat to avoid it.

"The curse of the first nail, *signore*," observed his guide sympathetically. "The Jew-women are free from it, for the sake of Mary Mother."

"The first nail?"

"*Si, signore*. When the Paynim hounds struck the first nail into the Blessed Hand, they were cursed with a smell that should make them good hunting for all Christians. When they hammered the second one, they were cursed with tails that only drop off at the touch of holy water. When they drove the spike into the Feet, they were cursed with the hate of good Christians for ever; and when they planted the Holy Cross in the ground they were cursed with the doom of wandering over the earth till the Day of Judgment."

The gondola was nearing two high-pooped barges, moored square across

an opening in high gloomy walls bristling above the edges of a long low island. Talbot drew up his cloak mask-fashion, and beckoned the sentinel of the foremost with a significant gesture. The conference was short, and as the two palms fell apart, Talbot signed the gondola onwards.

The sea-wind, stirring outside, was left behind as the boat ran in under the barges to the gate of the Ghetto. A reek of human creatures, crowded in insufficient space, filled the air, not a breath of which moreover was free from floating filaments, the down of countless fowls preparing for some feast. The canal, up which Talbot was rowed, was stagnant as a duck-pond, topped by a thick green film wrinkling under the on-coming pole; but frowsy-locked women leaned from the windows of the grim houses on either side, to add fresh offerings of garbage to the decay hidden under its waters.

In spite of such unsavoury dangers, the gondola stood on stoutly, curving suddenly into the entrance of a square where the wildest misrule seemed to prevail. A band of half-grown maidens, their long hair plaited with strings of pearls, were in the act of entering the square from the other side, each carrying on her head a jar of pottery which as the troop in turn marched past a certain spot, was dashed down and broken into shards. The shrill singing of the girls jangled into cries and laughter as the procession broke at a corner under the onslaught of a number of young men riding on donkeys and waving burning fir-branches above their heads. The acrid smell of the wood streamed out on the fetid atmosphere as the donkeys, encumbered by their gay housings of striped silk, charged hither and thither, each rider, as his branch burned to a stump, leaping off, intent on unseating a more fortunate fellow.

Children, pelting each other with nuts, swarmed everywhere, making factions out of the cause of one and another rider, whose fate was generally the desertion of his regiment at the hottest of the scuffle. Over and through all squeaked, droned, and hummed an unearthly orchestra of every possible conglomeration of parchment and catgut cut through now and then by the resonant clash of cymbals, or a long-drawn wail which set Talbot looking around for its possible cause.

An eddy in the human whirlpool drew his eyes to one side of the square, from which the peculiar noise sounded. Talbot had landed, and he pushed his way nearer in time to see a rabble escorting a life-size figure dressed in a caftan, and heralded by twelve men blowing rams' horns. Their lugubrious wails continued as the effigy was carried twice round the square, before being deposited on a butcher's chopping-block round which the crowd clustered with yells of derision.

"Tis the Haman, *signore*," observed the gondolier at Talbot's elbow; "a poor little fellow who did a Jew a bad turn a hundred years ago, they say, and the dogs make a bonfire of him thus every year, instead of serving him out at the time and forgiving him afterwards, like all good Christians."

"How is this marriage-broker you tell of to be found?" Talbot responded, raising his voice above the din.

"I will guide you to him in the breaking of an egg, *signore*. He lives by the waterside, for the better coming and going of his merchandise."

The young men shouldered their way forward at a pace set by Talbot's impatience. His eyes strayed anxiously during the walk in a hope of at least spying out Ben-Levi's wise slow smile, but as his companion scratched

lightly at a doorway overhung by a projecting window, he gathered all his faculties to one point.

The door, opened by a bobbin and cord, drew back softly at the signal, the departing guide giving his employer a friendly push that sent him stumbling down a couple of steps into twilight. Talbot could with difficulty make out the outlines of a man seated cross-legged, fixing his visitor with unwinking eyes set in innumerable wrinkles.

"Does the gentleman seek one, or any?" he demanded without stirring.

"I seek one," Talbot replied; "one more than common tall, with dark bright curls clustering over a small head held proudly, with a glow of red on a brown young cheek, and eyes that are mossed like agates and dark and clear like them."

"And how much will a great gentleman give for such a one?" enquired the marriage-broker.

"A gold piece for the sight of her."

"Be it as the gentleman says—six gold pieces," the Jew returned gravely.

"Jew's money breeds fast, I've heard," retorted Talbot. "Come, I will mate the gold piece to another, and leave the begetting of more to you; but if I add my blessing on the increase, 'twill be all you'll get from me."

"Be it as the gentleman says—eight gold pieces," said the Jew.

"Why, you old shrew, it was six but now! What hinders it that I help myself for love to the goods you've got, and the Ghetto guard called in to see the bargain struck?"

"Nothing," replied the broker stolidly, "except a mere trifle, the *iod* in the word importance surely,—the gentleman does not care to set those of Venice to find his bride."

Talbot started involuntarily. "Then lead me to her, and earn your gold pieces."

"Be it as the gentleman says,—

ten gold pieces," observed the Jew monotonously.

"Ten then, and may the devil cheat you in the bargain he drives for your soul!" cried Talbot, flinging the price at the broker's head. The latter without stirring from his carpet, caught them one by one, with the quickness of a juggler's eye and hand. "The gentleman commands," he said then, rising from his seat; "it is for dogs to obey. We shall find what you seek in the dance-house; it is the apple of the Ghetto's eye."

"What's your meaning?"

"The safest place in this New Egypt of ours, *signore*, and to-day, when we are celebrating the Feast of Purim, the quietest. But at all times in the dance-house, our maidens may appear without the blue-striped veils which elsewhere they must wear, to mark them out to the Gentile eye as good bargains."

"Not so good if you have the chaffering," returned Talbot, answering his odd satirical smile. The Jew plunged into a dark low passage, at the end of which a pale green light glimmered feebly, the goal to the young man as he groped after his conductor. Discs of colour floating before eyes suddenly brought into darkness, dazzled them into bewilderment as Talbot finally emerged into the sunlight of a courtyard set about with pomegranate hedges. Women, with blue-black hair gathered under golden nets, stared with wistful glances at the comely fellow, or trailed silken trains painted with quaint Eastern birds and flowers, in stately ignoring of the marriage-broker's appearance. Beyond, a colonnaded space gave a vignette of figures swinging in tune to a melody clashed out on the timbrels the dancers shook above their heads, their ardour spurred into inspiration by a crescent of staring spectators.

The broker's twinkling eyes were on Talbot's face. "How many stones of the Ghetto would be left on one another if the Gentiles knew it held such a garden as this?" he said.

The question woke Talbot from his temporary astonishment. "Have not the Ghetto folk a right to live in the Ghetto as they will?" he asked in his turn.

"Has the Jew a right to aught?" returned the other drily. "Is it not due to the bounty of the Christian that he may live and breathe on the same earth under the same sky? Does not the Gentile permit us to remember the brotherhood of all men but in the one way,—by taking our monies at his need? But ingratitude is a curse, *signore*; as our people cried out long ago against the Egyptians when they rated the laziness in which the sons of Jacob made pretence that they could not be in two places at once, so now they grumble that, having had the earning of their money, they should not have the spending of it as well; that to live, to take a wife, to beget children, should each carry its own tax with it. 'Tis an ungrateful race, and these silly popinjays, preening their feathers before us, are tarred with the same brush. They grow tired of being mewed in this Ghetto of ours, heavily though every Hebrew must purchase his right to dwell here, and some of the people would murmur against that too, *signore*, when it is forbidden by law to dwell anywhere else in Venice. So our women come here at seasons, to smell the growing flowers, and to air the fine clothes which their women's hearts take pleasure in, but which elsewhere must be covered with the blue-striped veils to make the wearers known to all men as in old time the leper was made known,—for the unclean thing!"

The acute bitterness edging the



satire, touched Talbot even through his anxiety for tidings of his wife. "Yet you let me, a Gentile, in at the first blush."

The broker made an obeisance. "One answered for by our Chacham has the freedom of the Ghetto. I have guided you here to him at his desire; he has sworn that our enemies are yours also."

Talbot followed the direction of his look, in time to see a tall figure coming towards them. A second glance sent him forward to greet Ben-Levi.

The snail-gatherer, oddly altered by the Chacham's robe and phylacteries, met him with his usual slight smile. "She is safe," he said. "Come, she will begin to believe it herself when she sees you before her."

Talbot stepped forward through the sunny patch of garden-ground, unconscious of the languorous-lidded girls clustered on the edge of the stone well with its canopy of vines in young leaf. The absorption of the lover who bears for device, *We and the world*, was on him as he sprang up the stairs to a gallery curtained with trails of blossom, at the entrance to which Ben-Levi merely waved him on, discreetly withdrawing himself.

With a cooing sound of laughter Fiamma sprang to meet him, yielding to his arms before the lovely shyness that had held her through her wedding came again upon her, making her shrink like a fluttered bird, and stand passive in his hold. The water-clock had dripped through more minutes than one when a certain relaxing of Talbot's clasp made Fiamma dare a fugitive full look at him, starting as she saw the pale masterling his bronzing.

"You are ill!"

"Nothing but what a meal and a wet rag with a touch of those brown fingers of yours, sweetheart, will put right." Talbot spoke carelessly, but

the maternal instinct in woman's love kindled in the girl's face wiping out the shyness that was the last thought of self. Hands that trembled as never in personal danger helped to rid him of his doublet, revealing a blood-stained sleeve and a gash beneath it from wrist to elbow.

"No worse than that from the barber's fleam in the spring-time," Talbot said as she darted to summon Ben-Levi, but the shadow on her face did not lighten even at the Jew's echo of his words. "That my first gift to you should have been a wound!" she sighed.

"And one that I shall carry the marks of longer than this, sweet! That was dealt me when I opened my eyes on you lying in the mouth of that grassed burying-place among the hills. Your face at first sight stamped itself burning as any branding-iron on my heart; and the worst of it was that your boy's tunic cried *Fool* to your haunting of me."

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

THEY were alone in the garden again, the Jew's salves cool upon Talbot's scratch. Once or twice Fiamma had questioned about Carnation and the flight to come, but he had parried her questions, and the two basked in each other's presence, the sweetness of the flowers rising up about them in spicy incense. The noise of the street sounded faintly as the buzz of the bees in the almond-scented garlands of the balconies; once, as Fiamma leaned upon the rail, a girl, with sweet eyes in a serious childish face, flung up from the garden a blossoming orange-branch, and smiled as Fiamma caught it. Through the stillness of the summer morning the fountain tossed and tinkled like a joy without end.

Talbot slept. Fiamma was smooth-

ing the thick curls from his forehead with light fingers, ready to start back at the first waking movement, when a hand grasped her. Ben-Levi's face, gray with fear, appeared over her shoulder. "The Philistines are upon us!"

Without moving the girl heard his acute whisper, but her eyes turned from him, gazing at the blossoming garden and the branches traced against the blue air, as one dying might look a farewell to the green growing earth. Talbot had sprung to his feet, speaking with Ben-Levi in swift whispers, his features sharpening under the pressure of his impotence. The women had vanished, leaving the garden desolate as a sunny patch of heather deserted by its furry wild-life at the shadow of the hawk balancing above it. Only the marriage-broker stood a few paces distant, with an odd smile, as if he saw fugitives groping for life in a blind-alley.

The desperate council was only for a moment. Talbot slipped his arm about Fiamma's waist and drew her against his shoulder. "The officers are in the Ghetto already, you say, searching from house to house for this bold Bonaventuri of ours who has been tracked here by the Four Spies on Mocenigo's behalf? And the Jews one and all have been bidden resort each to his dwelling, with the parchments of his household's right to dwell there, that they who are running so briskly this morning may read? Faith, my girl, in this game of puss i' th' corner, it seems that you and I are the pussies in the middle!" He caught his breath, looking tenderly at the girl on his breast. "If there was a road to be tried," he began—"and, by God, there is!" His eyes were ablaze with excitement. "What's to hinder the Haman in the *campo* lending you that caftan of his?"

"A Gibeonite for guile!" It was the marriage-broker who spoke, his face kindling at the daring words. "If the girl has courage for it, she may ransom her life."

"She has courage," her husband answered for her. "I'll have a try to lead the chase away from you, and by the obedience you vowed to me last night I charge you not to balk me!"

With only a brave smile Fiamma turned from him, hurrying with the broker towards the lower rooms of the dance-house. At his sign she tore off her upper garments, while the snail-gatherer threw a tattered red and yellow caftan over her. The two men worked with swiftness, covering her face and hands with some dark stain, daubing her cheeks with blood from a cat's tail, finally fastening on her head the huge wig of horsehair taken from the Haman itself, lying where its supporters had cast it, as they rested in the dance-house in their last interrupted round.

The search was sweeping towards the dance-house now, the immemorial sanctity of which would be violated to-day. Some of the Haman escort were straggling back, marked on back and breast with the Republic's seal that their deeds of right in the Ghetto had passed muster. Wonderingly enough they obeyed their Chacham's signal, to resume the interrupted festivity, supported now by his own presence.

"Courage!" he whispered, under cover of the blaring horns, as the broker and he cautiously raised Fiamma on their shoulders.

The children, doubly excited by the advent of the body of searchers, ran together, pelting the Haman with nuts smeared with honey or with handfuls of mud. Fiamma's head was dizzied with the motion and the eldritch screech of the horns;

her body trembled with the effort to keep it upright; her eyes, closed by dark clots of paint, ached to bursting; she almost obeyed an insane desire to open them as the leaping, hooting spectators came to a stand, and she realised that the contemptuous interest of the searchers had been tickled by the quaint ceremony.

The closed eyes could not see the figure with all its grace of young manhood striding up the street. "Do the errands of the Republic wait, while her servants stand gaping at every street-corner?" The gay careless voice to which every pulse in Fiamma's body seemed tuned, struck on her ears, her heart, almost holding it still. The voice had never sounded more careless as Talbot stood negligently, reading a suspicion in every face turned to him. "What ails you all?" he demanded smoothly. "Have you lost your tongues as little Bo-Peep lost her sheep in the song my naut in England used to sing to me? They brought their tails home after their wandering, and I have a tale too of my own, if you would spare one of your men to set me across this lagoon to the palace of the Capelli."

The daring request set each man looking in his neighbour's face. The Capelli's agent,—of whom two men, bruised and bleeding, had that morning in the palace guardroom told a grim story—stood before them, asking for what, if a word of the story were true, would be his death.

"Come!" Talbot repeated impatiently. "How long do ten men take to nose out what one with his wits about him knows already? A boat, I say; I warrant you there are those at the Palace Trevisani with ears for what I could tell them."

"Take him to the boats," the captain of the search commanded, ending

another doubtful pause. "Innocent or guilty, he will be sure either way of a welcome from the old Capelli, and we have received no order concerning him as yet from the Ten."

"The Ten have other fish to fry to-day," put in a soldier, before he was peremptorily checked by the captain for the disrespect of his allusion. His laugh drowned to the agonised ears above Talbot's firm departing footsteps, Fiamma seemed to lose touch with her body in the numb despair beating in upon her as she perceived Talbot's generous reckless design, to draw off suspicion from the Ghetto and its secret. Already the attempt had so far succeeded, that the Venetians allowed the procession to pass on without bestowing any further attention upon it.

The girl set her teeth and endured as she felt the men under her move again, and the unearthly babel woke once more. "Courage!" reiterated Ben-Levi, as he helped to lower her to the wooden pedestal in the centre of the square. The trumpeters formed a guard, for the Haman must be protected till nightfall, when the bonfire would blaze best. The spectators ebbed and flowed, new ones taking the place of those with their fill of leaping and shouting. The girl, standing like a statue, cursed them in her heart, even the children, who shook their tiny fists in her direction and lisped maledictions as a part of the game. The afternoon seemed to weave itself into a cope of lead dragging down the weary limbs.

All at once the shut eyelids quivered. Through the thick nasal intonations she heard the guttural Venetian voices once more, as the search-party were returning across the square to their boats. One of the men, out of humour at their foiled mission, spat right and left into the crowd about the Haman. "Take that for your hideous Beffana!"

he jeered, snatching a knife from a boy near. The weapon flew straight and struck into Fiamma's shoulder.

Blood! The blood that would betray all!

A single voice rose up shrilly, the cracked tones of the marriage-broker. "What's to show for a wound if there's not blood?" he cried. "Let his black blood flow!" On the instant he had caught up a bladder filled with blood from the butcher's stall at hand, flinging it dexterously at the cowering figure. It burst under the blow, and the dark viscous stream gushed out over the drops oozing from the girl's arm.

Drenched from neck to knee in the crimson torrent, Fiamma stood gallantly passive, the brave will holding at bay the ghastly faintness besieging her. The hot pain of her wound was almost welcome as an ally, but when hands came about her lifting her from her pillory, she was unable to ask whether the dice had fallen for success or failure. The relief from the strained position so long persisted in, was soothing as a lullaby, as she lay blissfully conscious of kind hands removing her drenched bespattered disguise; but even when warm scented water refreshed her burning skin and set the sealed eyelids free, minutes passed before the long hazel eyes opened with a question in them. "Is he safe?"

The question had found a voice, weak and trembling, but distinct in the blessed silence that was purging her ears from the din of the streets. The women, moving about the matted upper chamber, greeted the faint voice with smiles; the girl who had tossed her the orange-blossom that morning was bending over her. "One of our young men has gone forth to bring us the first news," she said, but her eyes had already told how sweet her voice must be. "You must sleep and be strong for his coming, after I have

put this nard on your shoulder where the Gentile's knife struck."

The room grew fragrant with spices, and the charm of the cool perfumed stillness worked, lulling Fiamma to a state between sleeping and waking. The wash of the sea below came pleasantly on her drifting sense, till a dream drew Mark Talbot's face so vividly upon her sleeping eyelids that, with a smile in her eyes to match the smile in his, she woke.

The women had left the chamber, gone out perhaps, while she slept, to hear news, which concerned her alone of all the Ghetto. Fiamma gathered the loose wrapping-robe of white silk about her, and crossed the chamber. The door opened upon the gallery where, that morning, Talbot had come to her. A man stood now in front of her, plucking at the purple blossoms. She grasped his arm with imperative fingers. "Ben-Levi, you have news?"

"Scanty as the gleanings after the olive-gatherers. He was seen to enter the Capelli palace."

"Nothing more?"

"Nothing,—of him." The Jew turned, showing his dishevelled hair and beard, and the gabardine rent from neck-piece to hem. "Ah, my mistress, ah, the child I fostered, had not life sinned sorely enough against thee that death need add a bitterness of violence to thy cup! Whom didst thou ever wrong they should lie in wait for thee?"

At the low wailing tone Fiamma fell back, putting her hand to her throat as though to free herself from a strangling fear. "Quick, old man! Of whom do you speak?" But she knew already, and the question ended in a moaning cry. She cowered against the balcony-rail, cringing as under bodily pain. "Where—when—who?"

"She lies on her own bed," Ben-

Levi answered dully, "the knife that slew her on the floor by her. The slayer must have fallen on her at daybreak, for she was cold when they found her, dead in the wedding-garments she had snatched from you."

With a sharp breath Fiamma drew herself up. "This is the work of Cassandra the sorceress!"

The Jew, grief-stricken as he was, raised his head at the deadly quiet of the voice. The white weary face was rigid, the eyes in it burned like coals.

"Get me clothes,"—Fiamma broke the silence that had seemed to hold a vow—"quickly!"

"What do you purpose?"

"To stand face to face with the murderess who, in her frantic jealousy, has destroyed a woman whose like we shall never see again. Stop me not, for I alone can deal the punishment that will burn hotter than hell's coals."

"Madness!" the Jew responded to the quivering words. "Now the Nameless One be my witness that Carnation's death is to me as that of a firstborn to a mother's soul, but the dead herself would sooner go down quick into Gehenna, rather than that your safety should again be set in jeopardy! Hist!" at the girl's gesture, "if you are willing to pour out your life on the sand as David-Ben-Jesse the water of Bethlehem, you cannot bring destruction on the nation that has sheltered you. Know you not the vengeance that would be wreaked if you were tracked from the Ghetto that has hour-long defied the searchers? Have you not ears to hear the weeping of Rachel for the little ones dashed against the stone when the spoilers ravined the spot given over to their fury?"

With a heart-rending cry Fiamma cast herself down, clasping his knees.

"Let me go, only go," she gasped, "to blight Cassandra with the truth, then to die with him! What torture can they give him half so bitter as the being parted from me? Besides," she added, as a hope steadied the wild voice, "I will seek the Capelli, tell her all, on condition of his pardon; I will give her the warning for which she must be grateful. Curses on me, that I had not the thought sooner!"

"What is the nation to a love-sick girl?" unexpectedly interrupted the marriage-broker's voice. "Less than a broken shoe-latchet, if she could make her bargain through it, man, woman, and child!" He looked askance at his Chacham. "But we, who are not in love, rate ourselves higher, and it may be when you are cured of the madness you will not be sorry that you were hindered from throwing your life away like an onion-skin. Till midnight it is, whatever you may think, for the happiness of the greater number that you should abide with us here in New Egypt; after midnight, ways and means of bringing you forth to the mainland will be provided, and that's for the happiness of the greater number too."

"Has the young man sent word he will meet her in the marshes, Annas?" enquired Ben-Levi in an eager undertone.

"We will not wait for his messenger," returned the broker. "His present whereabouts is knowledge enough for a wise man, without his Cabbala to read the future! The Capelli will set her guest a riddle harder than that of Samson to expound. By the dawn—for he is a proper man—but by the dawn, they will have got the answer to their question, and she whom they seek must be vanished then in good earnest from the Ghetto."

The snail-gatherer gave the sigh of a man faced with an inexorable con-

clusion. He laid his hand on Fiamma, crouched where she had ceased to speak, but with the fierce light still in her eyes. "We would do the best we can for thee, daughter," he said; "but there are women and children within these walls, who also must have thought taken for them. This good day of Purim is not ended yet; perchance its cause of birth holds an omen for us, that the plots of the wicked shall be confounded by the weak they make ready their mouths to swallow up."

Like a frozen woman Fiamma kept her place, neither eye nor ear granted to the marriage-broker's sneers or Ben-Levi's futile sympathy. She yielded stiffly to the latter's effort to raise her, moving with the wide unseeing eyes of a sleep-walker towards the room before assigned to her.

She was thankful for the silence, the solitude, those two things that are the heriot of sorrow. With arms flung over the window-sill she crouched, her misery beating in upon the brain vainly shuffling *what was into what might have been*. The summertide before her with its wash of weeds trailing hither and thither over its thinly-covered reach of purple mud, changed in her mind's eye to grassy mountains, such as those among which she and her blue-eyed lover had ridden the day long, and felt a vague spite at Fate, incomprehensible to themselves. Fiamma smiled to think of the edged sayings which once and again she had drawn upon him, in defiance of the heart-beating that acknowledged every glance of those keen eyes. The young red lips parted softly as though in their faint response to that first firm kiss from the lips of a man.

A gray shadow stole across the blue lagoon, and Fiamma's mood changed. Carnation's blind dead face rose in her mind; Talbot's image too stood far out on the sad sea; it also had grown

ghastly, and the tide of death flowed inexorably between the dead and the living, washing out footprints that had walked in company, baffling clutching hands, leaving nothing but the tide-mark of remembrance, that only seemed a sign of how much the sea had spoiled.

Fiamma rose up with a gasping sob, and a fierce light in her eyes. "If I have to fight my way foot by foot to the Ghetto gate, I will leave it!" she said through her shut teeth.

Her bare feet carried her noiselessly through the gallery, on which several doors opened. She cast a hurried look round each chamber. The first two or three were blank; the fourth a storehouse apparently for clothes in every variety, gave her what she needed.

Her old steadiness of nerve had come back to her, as she rapidly selected some man's garments and put them on once more. Her plan, so far as the fierce wild thoughts in the curly head could be called so, was in her new dress to walk boldly through the carnival. The Cardinal's crucifix had been left on her neck, and she was resolved at need to use it.

A boat passed, far out on the summer sea, yet not so far that the idle eyes of a girl at the window could not distinguish the black caps and sashes of its rowers, the Nicolotti badge.

The chough's cry! At the thought she had given it, sending the plaintive call out steadily over the water. The boat paused, over a patch of purple, telling of a shoal below.

Again, with a leaping thought of thankfulness that this seaward side of the Ghetto afforded no spies, again rose the chough's call, louder, harsher. With her prow high out of water, as a good horse lifts his nose, the boat was responding, dancing near and nearer to the Jews' Island, with the light breeze for a spur.



A man in the boat stood up to hail. "Who calls?"

"A Nicolotto to Nicolotti!"

The boat curtsied on the ripples. Thus far and no farther, and a stretch of olive-coloured mud between. "Give the password, if indeed a Nicolotto sticks in that skin o' thine."

She tried once or twice, before she spoke it out, loud and clear:—

"My blood is red,  
My scarf is black,  
And one's at your service,  
For one's on your back!"

"*Cio*, what do you want of us?"

"A passage in your boat from this cursed island."

As she said it, she claimed it. For one second the straight figure was framed in the lines of the casement, the next, she had leaped down into the mud. Like the folds of a cuttlefish it held, drawing her downwards by the feet. The men in the boat swore strange oaths and bestirred themselves; a good-natured fellow swung himself overboard, a boathook between his teeth. The mud sucked slowly; and water, in which a boat could not draw, gave a swimmer many yards to swim. The Nicolotto swam on; but the mud had risen between knee and waist before the swimmer, keeping himself skilfully afloat, was near enough to push the pole towards Fiamma. The girl had stood resolutely still, since she found her struggles only sank her deeper, but now she grasped the wood till the muscle stood out on the slender arms. The men in the boat drew upon the cord they had tied about their swimmer. With all his strength he held to the pole as Fiamma held to it, till the elastic cypress-wood curved and creaked, but it did not break. With blood starting under the finger-nails they held to it, till the clasping mud resigned what it could not keep,

and smoothed itself sullenly once more.

"Body o' Bacchus, brother, does Death owe you money that you must be in such haste to run after him?" expostulated the boatmen, as the dripping figure was lifted into the boat by half a dozen hands. "I knew not that we numbered a madman in our School."

Fiamma offered no explanation. With a last effort of quivering muscles she gave the grip to the man who had rescued her, then with closed eyes emphasising her real exhaustion, she sank down on a pile of nets, turning her face to Venice. Already another object of interest seemed to loom upon the horizon, for after a few sentences of rough banter, the sailors ceased to notice her, they too looking out eagerly towards the city.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

THE boat sailed over the sea. The sailors, clustering about the prow, looked shorewards, sinewy hands shading black intent eyes. The purple sail flapped lazily on its ropes, and the water slid under the bows with its murmuring sea-song, lullaby or dirge. Out of the blue silence of sea and sky, as the boat sailed on, crept a music of flutes and cellos, thrilling and throbbing over the lagoon. It strung the eagerness of the crew afresh; the weariness of the night and day's toil on the open sea passed from them as they stood at gaze. "Here they come, noses pointed straight for home! Good-luck has steered us; we shall see all the splendours where we stand," they cried to each other.

The music swelled keener and sweeter, winning even Fiamma's careless ears. She rose, and found a place for herself among the brown-skinned sailor-men.

Down the wind, between her and the open sea, came the music, two boats-full, heralds to the flotilla which spread behind them, right and left, in two great wings of colour, centering in the tall golden barge riding high on the water, plumed by the crimson banner of St. Mark.

A great burst of music seemed to cleave a way for the proud ship as she swept onwards, answered by the fanfares of the silver trumpets on her deck. The golden figure of Justice on her bows was scarcely more radiant than the company grouped on the carved and gilded gallery measuring its hundred feet from stem to stern, the crimson of its velvet canopy sobered by the scarlet robes of the nobles, superb sons of the sea, who by virtue of their order sat on their ninety seats near the throne. Red, blue, white and purple, the colours of the Republic streamed gallantly on the wind, but the banner with the winged and aureoled lion blazoned in gold seemed to carry the more majesty for the sullenness of its heavy folds. And under the drooping crimson silk the majesty seemed to concentrate in the somewhat bent spare man who sat on the Bucintoro as a chieftain sits his warhorse, and who wore the brocaded bonnet over his plain white linen cap as a monarch wears his crown. All the pomp and arrogance of Venice were symbolised by the bearing of the figure under the trailing mantle of gold and ermine over its cassock of blue; but all the far-seeing policy and indomitable spirit were expressed too in the worn face of this king of the sea, with the eyes that seemed weary of gazing into tortuous state-intrigues,—the look of seeing into illimitable distances, such a look as the sea herself lends to her followers.

A sweet smell of incense rose above the sea-salt, as the Bucintoro moved

on out of the middle distance. The decorous brilliance of the churchmen, chastened by fine lace and embroidered white linen, came in the wake of the golden keel, the white-mitred Patriarch scarcely a less impressive figure than the Doge, the incense from the silver censers swung by the acolytes rolling about him in mists, and lighted candles glittering like topazes on the sunny air. But now the faces of the watching Nicolotti darkened, and more than one muttered a prayer for his patron-saint's ear; for the boats that held men in sombre violet, with sphinx-faced servants with black staves, were floating past, and Fiamma needed no telling that she was looking upon the Ten.

And now boats, long and narrow like sea birds, began to dart to and fro over the water, while richly dressed youths, kneeling on gay cushions in the prows, shot plaster pellets from crossbows at the heaving fringe of watching craft that by this time had drifted neighbours with the Nicolotti vessel. Under the brisk peppering they gave back, huddling together at either side of a cleared space of green water swept by the stately progress of the great golden barge.

Half the fleet were gone by, and half were yet to come, but the rowers held them in leash. Down the broad green pathway only one boat was floating, attached by a line that looked like a single sunbeam to a skiff shaped like a swan which sailed immediately after the barge of the Ten, a white boat with a silver angel towering high at either end. Cloth of silver trailed overboard as though paving the boat's path with moonshine, and an arch of white lilies rose on the deck, sending out a greeting of innocence to the world. And within the arch, framed by all that purity and sweetness, stood the one whom all Venice had come abroad to honour

to-day, Bianca Capelli, from to-day by style and title fosterling of the Republic, the adopted daughter of St. Mark.

White as her lilies she stood there, her fair curls loose over the bare beautiful arms. Not a jewel broke the sweep of the white draperies down to the slender foot which, the whiter for its silver sandal, was pressed on the tawny shoulder of a lion that, tame with narcotics, crouched like a dog before his mistress. Motionless as the beast the woman stood, a delicate flush on each cheek, life only in the blue eyes turning restlessly from point to point as though challenging the spectators for their homage.

The challenge was answered. With a roar that roused the drowsy lion to quiver under the arched shining foot, it was answered, bursting out again and again like a resistless fire, flinging itself sky high. Women tossed their shawls in the air, men floated kisses from brown fingers, a thousand throats shouted like one, to do homage to the white daughter of St. Mark.

A cry, long and shrill, cleft the silence when the spent voices could no longer strive against it. From some distance behind, a boat broke through the procession, a small boat, a swift boat, containing also a single standing woman, clad only in a coarse red chemise. The boat hurried as in stress down the green pathway, where the woman in white and silver had gone before. In the wind of its speed the woman's long black hair streamed like some pirate's flag of destruction. "A gift to the daughter of Venice!" she cried. "A gift—I bring a gift to Venice to-day!" The gift she had to bring showed in all its hideousness as she cried and tossed her arms above her head. The face was distorted, livid spots blotching it here and there, and the black hollow eyes were those of a madwoman.

And as Fiamma looked she knew the crazed Jewess of the marshes.

Like dust before the on-coming wind boats broke from her path, and the voices that had shouted before pealed again, hoarse and trembling: "Jesus, Mary! The Pestilence!"

As the awful cry rang out Bianca turned, and saw the terror on her track. The blue eyes gazed for a moment before the slow-witted Venetian grasped the danger, but then she too screamed aloud, and flung herself cowering on the lion, hiding her eyes in his mane.

Like dust before the hurricane the stately procession had scattered. The golden cord attaching the Barge of Innocence to her towing-boat broke with a snap, and the white boat lay still upon the water.

The madwoman lashed her pole through the ripples on the prey that must fall to her. Far away on the Bucintoro, the Doge had started up from under the shell-like canopy of the throne, but the golden Caryatides supporting it were not deaf to his commands than the rowers tugging for dear life. Priests and people, nobles and seamen, had joined the mad rout; even the Ten had ceased to offer rewards and threats to deaf ears.

"A gift—I bring a gift to Venice!" The mad shriek broke into the snarl of a beast robbed of its prey. The swan-boat had disentangled itself from the press and was flying back on its track, the old Capelli erect within it, brandishing a stiletto over the rower. Straight for the white boat it swept; and straight for the white boat swept the Pestilence.

The lion, roused by the tumult, had risen, switching his tail sullenly from side to side. His change of position had dragged Bianca to her knees; her face hidden she knelt, with her white hands buried in the mane

beginning to bristle along the beast's back.

The plague-tainted woman had ceased to row, the way on the boat carrying her down on the barge. As a man riding for life spurs his horse to the leap, so old Capelli savagely pricked the gasping rower with the naked dagger, till the swan shuddered forward like a living thing. It swerved to the left of the Barge of Innocence, and fouled full and fair the boat that brought the Pestilence.

The crash of rending timbers chafed the lion's restlessness further. Already he had sent a deep-chested roar over the water; now he crouched and sprang, full on old Capelli climbing in over the barge's side. The two went down together, but as they struggled among the floating fragments of the smaller boats the man was grappled by arms that clasped and held like the memory of a great wrong. The red and violet figures slid downwards through the green translucent water, the lion's piteous cries coming on the hush like some strange death-knell.

More fortunate than his master, the Capelli's oarsman had succeeded in clambering into the barge. A few boats were venturing nearer, now that the plague-stricken woman had vanished; the white daughter of the Capelli had taken courage to rise, straightening her dishevelled robes, while she gazed unmovedly towards the drowning lion.

"Sorrow, madness, pestilence, death, on the innocent, while that one escapes by a miracle!" Fiamma muttered fiercely. "Truly yet, masquerade though this world seems often enough, the Great Unmasking will finish it in its own time, though that time is not ours."

The Nicolotti, well to leeward at the onslaught of the Jewess, had not had need to alter their position mate-

rially, though drifting with the tide setting in towards Venice. Fiamma, at her old post among the nets, observed an alacrity in handling the sailing-tackle which made her suspect her companions of a wish to mingle with the mass of craft making shorewards, lest their supine neighbourhood to the Barge of Innocence should hereafter be reckoned against them by any ill-disposed on-looker with a measure of authority. Anxiety also was possibly shown in a lack of the curiosity which Fiamma had dreaded, lest, parry it as she might, she should arouse a blaze of fury against the Jews. She breathed more freely when the crew landed at an unfrequented stage lying behind the golden domes of St. Mark.

Without hindrance she separated from them, making for the deserted palace with the sense of locality that her mountains had bred in her. Scarcely a bald-headed, wrinkled hag was in the street to look after her as she passed; the ears and eyes and tongues of Venice were on the Piazzetta, strained to the utmost to do justice to the passing of the Doge from the waterside to the ducal palace. The glittering vanguard of ambassadors and officials had reformed as though the pale terror had never broken their ranks; the train of city *signori* moved between the human walls of gazers as though one of their number had not been left behind in those shining waters, with his state-robes of purple for sheet and shroud. At the heart of the gorgeous pageant the Doge under the golden umbrella took his stately way, leading by the hand the white-clothed woman who smiled and looked round upon the people as though the shining garments of innocence were not to be replaced by mourning weeds, as though the death of a father was a light price to pay for

the glory of becoming the adopted daughter of St. Mark. Yet above the colour and glitter the joyful music of the voyage had passed into the sobbing of cellos and the wailing of flutes, and the flags of the Republic dropped against their painted staves, while far out at sea a moaning water and sad mourning purple on a bastion of cloud spoke of unrest and coming storm.

Without a thought to the deserted streets Fiamma hurried through them. She was possessed by a fixed purpose as her feet climbed the stair over which she had last passed as a bride, and entered the chamber where she had last seen Carnation.

But with her first step over the threshold, she stopped short, as though she had interrupted one to whom King Death was giving audience.

Slowly she moved at last, creeping forward to the form laid straightly on the bed. The repellent conventionalities of shroud and winding-sheet were not here; Carnation lay folded in the faint rosiness of the wedding-mantle, her fair hair like an aureole of pale sunshine about her face. Something of a smile seemed shut within the pale closed lips, as of a dreamer whose dream is pleasant, the haunting of haggard unrest for ever laid to rest under the quiet eyelids.

Through the chamber crept a low moaning, the pulse of dreary pain. To stand and moan, till herself listened with dull pity to herself, was all Fiamma could do; the heavy sound went on even when she knelt at last, laying hot lips on the hands folded over the little crown lying on the dead mother's breast as it had lain on her dead baby. To moan like some soft wounded thing of the wood, too weak for teeth and claws,—no, there was one thing more she could do. "Thank God, I can bring her justice!"

The girl rose to her feet, her shaking limbs steadied at the thought. She set her face straight for the secret passages, the numbness in which grief had plunged her, falling from her at every step. Swift, stern as a Fate come to her hour, she sped along, stumbling, straying in the dark ways, till at length her determination triumphed, and she stood before a door. With a clash the purple velvet curtain slid back upon its rings and, too breathless for speech, the girl, entering behind the heavy velvet as she had done once before, stood and confronted the woman on the ebony couch. A pale flash of joy lit Cassandra's face for a moment; then it passed, the hands, transparent as fading lily-leaves, beginning to twine restlessly in the glory of her hair. "You have come—at last!" she muttered.

"From dead Carnation!" Fiamma returned, her words ringing like steel. "I have come,—from her to you,—the saints forgive me for coupling you in a breath—because a weapon remains to me keener than that with which you drained the life of her who had never wronged you even in a thought."

With a single gesture Cassandra swept aside her flowing hair and the silken tunic beneath it. Her eyes turned with a little scornful smile to Fiamma. "Strike, at your pleasure!"

An imperious finger answered her, pointing to the silver mirror at her side. The great gray eyes swerved, almost involuntarily. Within the polished silver a tall young figure dawned, lips and eyes stern with justice. As though drawing upon a foe, the slender hand moved suddenly, swiftly, and woman from throat to waist stood confessed in the mirror's depths. Steadily Cassandra lay, looking on what the mirror had to show. As steadily Fiamma stood, hardening

her heart for the judgment which she could not trust God to deal.

"The other woman's husband, whom you loved, lies since a month in Florence earth, stabbed by the daggers whetted on Capelli gold. If he had had your coat of mail, you might have boasted of your lover till—who knows?—another moon, but your messenger gave it to me. If he had caught Piccolo's whisper, he might have been living yet to carry his handsome face into some other fair lady's bower when your love had become an old story to him; but your misshapen imp warned me."

Shaken in every nerve by her fury of grief, Fiamma flung out the cutting words, but the woman on the couch listened without stirring a finger. A silence sultry as storm followed, broken at last by a quick sentence like the lightning-play among the clouds. "The stars never lie,"—Cassandra's face, white as a corpse, had grown almost as still, the motion of the ashen lips alone showing life. "As little as a woman's heart! But hope lies, and I believed what I chose to believe, though in my heart I knew the truth. Child, why did you not keep the tryst you spoke to me of? It was by that I swore to my soul to believe your tale, true or false."

"The tryst! No fault of mine! I told you fair and full I was not Pietro."

"You, my heart, and the stars, and a lying hope to baffle all three!" Cassandra tossed her hands above her head with a gesture that recalled to Fiamma the crazed woman on the lagoon. "Rather say it was Fate who has played with us—and won. And Bianca saved from vengeance by my hand!"

"Yours?"

The small hands idly twisted the hair they strayed among into a gleam-

ing rope. "It was I who bid her not to budge from Venice."

"Now may God forgive you!" said Fiamma very low. She turned unsteadily towards the entrance, walking with one hand outstretched, groping, the other curved about something in her bosom.

Cassandra watched her curiously. "You are going—where?"

"To the Capelli palace, to find my love and my revenge."

Even as the girl turned and spoke, Cassandra's look leapt beyond her. "Hush!" she whispered,—"*a strange foot!*"

"I must be gone."

"Fool!" Cassandra's hand forbade Fiamma's impetuous step toward the secret passage. "It comes that way."

"Then the other." Fiamma struggled to shake off the hand shut like a fetter on her wrist. "Loose me; this time I'll not be balked; will you keep a bride from her bridegroom?"

"That's no step of our Italians," murmured Cassandra. "Firm and light and quick, yet 'tis a stranger's by the blundering; we have time yet. You at least may be saved."

"Saved? I'll not be saved!" panted Fiamma on her knees, striving with the iron hand. "Let me go—to the Capelli—to die with my husband—my husband who has thrown away his life to guard mine, as though without him it would be worth the living."

Her passionate voice, broken into sobs, rose above the quickening footsteps. Writhing this way and that, the kneeling girl wrested herself from the iron grip and reeled backwards in the shock of parting to be caught close by the arms of a man in the instant of his headlong entrance,—caught and clasped and kissed by Mark Talbot.



## CHAPTER XXV.

"You are safe, safe!"

"With no slit in my skin to let out the life," Talbot answered gaily. "But you whom I left in the Ghetto, how came you here? But for a word dropped by the Jew I would have been running the street like a madman, if not asking your whereabouts from the Capelli herself."

"The Capelli! You threw yourself once already to the wolves for me!"

Talbot laughed, looking into her brimming hazel eyes. "Faith, sweeting, luck must have stood gossip when they christed me! When I bade the search-party in the Jew-quarter take me to the Trevisani, I had no thought but the trick of the mother-curlew on the moors at home to lead the chase away from what I cherished by fooling them on to my track. And when I was clapped into a chamber of the palace I could not for the life of me tell whether the history of my coming by a pretty wife would make up to the old Capelli for the borrowing of his signet-ring, or whether, if I loosed my tongue to him on his daughter's secrets, 'twere more likely to cut my bonds or my throat for me. But lo you, just as I fell to hoping they would not send me on the road to Paradise before supper-time, a chink in the wall let through to me Mrs. Bianca herself! She told me nought but that I was to leave Venice at cockcrow and journey hence to Florence, where I might look to be taken into her service as Grand Duchess. For, quoth she, Bianca pays her scores!"

"And Death carries the bag for her."

The lovers intent on each others' faces, started to the remembrance of the pale woman on the couch. Cassandra met their eyes with her in-

scrutable gaze, her hands still moving restlessly over the wonderful golden hair. "Pietro Bonaventuri, husband! The Englishman who knows enough secrets of the future Grand Duchess to make the slaying of him unsafe in Venice, Cassandra sorceress whom St. Mark's adopted daughter, guessing herself Cassandra's dupe, may at last venture to denounce to the Ten! Death must set out betimes if Bianca pays her scores to-night!"

"In this house we could hold him at bay," Talbot suggested.

Cassandra moved her head with a swift denial. "The kiss of a single torch would suffice to set these old walls in flame. Yet the maimed cripple can escape the Ten,—have no fear on that score. And you yourself will be safe enough,—till Venice lies at your back. 'Tis that one who, as proxy for the dead, will be paid a heavy reckoning." Fiamma, head and hand on Talbot's shoulder, seemed content to thus await Fate's next move. Cassandra glanced at her, wincing slightly as she looked away. "Proxy for the dead," she whispered, and minutes passed before she spoke again. "As a dead man you came to Venice, girl, and as a dead man you must leave it. Proxy for the dead,—this time no gay young gallant, but a graybeard furrowed with Time's ploughshare. Carpaccio! dead Carpaccio! 'tis in his guise you must pass from thence."

"Carpaccio! He lies in the chapel of the Capelli."

"Does he so? Then Bianca must have more faithful servants than she thought, when she pleaded with Piccolo to have him borne thence. The three days which must elapse before the poison dried in his veins were longer than any Lent to her; the prying priest who met the shrivelled corpse being carried forth at last, had no thanks of hers for

casting a covetous eye on the fees of burial on behalf of his brotherhood." She paused for breath, glancing again at the lovers. "But Carpaccio shall once more serve his mistress. The death-gondola will be here before another hour has past, and on it you shall float out from Venice."

With a gasp Fiamma raised her head. "Why should you save my life? If it had not been for me—for the cursed likeness which has cost two lives—"

Cassandra threw up her hand in an imperious gesture for silence. Her ashen lip caught between her teeth, she clapped her palms together, a signal which caused her mannikin to start apparently out of nothingness, disappearing almost as instantly in obedience to an order which his mistress gave him in an unknown tongue.

The strange woman met Talbot's look full. "If your eyes lie not, master stranger, your wit seems to have an edge to it as well as your sword. Once on dry land the two together should buy safety for you and your bride; till there, however, your safety lies in parting. Go you to Mestre, and there await the wife Piccolo shall pledge his hide to bring to you."

Talbot shook his head. "Good advice, madonna, is a hard pill to swallow. My wife and I have played hide and seek with each other long enough; from now out we live and die together."

"Fool, play the comedy as you will!" Cassandra's look turned on him with less scorn than her harsh words threatened. "'Tis easy enough to die together,—there's few in Venice will baulk you there,—but to live together will only be done by the aid you seem to hold so cheap." She interrupted herself, to speak some rapid words to the returned Piccolo.

"There, go with him; since you will play guardian-angel to your bride, there's but one way for it. Go, man yourself for ten minutes' separation, no longer, on my faith!"

A keen look at her and Talbot followed the dwarf. The women were left alone.

Fiamma could not repress a shudder as Cassandra began to busy herself with what her imp had brought her, the mask of a dead old man in wax, the growing moonlight giving the features a ghastly semblance of life. The swift fingers, moulding the wax into the likeness of the dead astrologer, alone moved. An occasional breath drawn hard was the only sound in the chamber, till the woman on the couch raised her head all suddenly. "Flutes, drums!" she muttered. "The death-gondola has begun its voyage. Nearer, girl; let's see how my handiwork sits on that of your Maker."

Silently Fiamma obeyed, bending within reach of the other's hands. Cassandra raised the mask but withheld it still, her fierce eyes fixed on the glowing young face. "Pietro's face hidden by death!" she said. "False face, dear face, dead face, good-bye!" As she spoke, she proceeded to adjust the mask, moulding it skilfully over the living countenance. "Fear nothing, you can breathe through these parted lips; the beard will conceal them. Fear not; in this world, fearing or loving, striving or mourning are labour wasted; Fate sets the board and moves us at her will. No forgiveness, this; Fate, not you and I, has to answer for what is passed between us." The low voice sank inaudibly, rising only into directions to Piccolo, whose hands Fiamma shuddered to feel about her, clothing her in various garments at his mistress's directions. Music, seeming the thin

echo of what she had heard that day, began to rise to her ears mingling with the tones of Cassandra's voice. "Give Piccolo your hand; let him guide you to the bier. Shrink not, little fool; does not your religion teach that the grave is the gate of life? Piccolo will guard you to your life; he too must to Florence, charged with Cassandra's last message to the Capelli."

"Piccolo,—but you?"

"I shall journey also—my place is prepared for me. There, get you gone; what art groping for?"

Fiamma advanced an uncertain step. "Let Pietro's sister part from you in peace."

"Peace, fool!" The burning hands touched hers, outstretched, pleading. "I have no grudge against you; nay, the truth from your lips has sucked the poison that soaked to my heart when I deemed Pietro false to me—"

She stopped abruptly, as a muscular hairy hand grasped Fiamma. "The feet of the Brotherhood are on the stairs!"

The moment was for swift action, not for speech. Swiftly, deftly they worked in the twilight chamber, putting the last touches to their handiwork till, as a sandalled footfall was heard without, all was ready. The shuffle approached the doorway, one black-shrouded form after another stealing through. One by one to the number of eight they came, gathered in the centre of the floor, turning their hooded faces in decorously-veiled curious scrutiny of the golden-haired woman on the couch, the swarthy dwarf at her side, the black-draped catafalque further back with the stately figure of the dead astrologer stretched upon it, the silver hair and beard flowing over the tightly-wound graveclothes. Under the stare of the great grey eyes the men shivered

vaguely, glad enough when the brother-in-charge received from the strange woman's white hand the parchment representing certain burial-fees, and they were free to bend their backs to the burden.

The funeral-music wailed out again as the brothers, bearing the bier, shuffled down the stairs. It drowned the dog-like inarticulate howling with which the dwarf suddenly dashed himself on the ground beside his mistress, mouthing her hand with tears and kisses. Twice the misshapen creature turned towards the door, and twice, dog-like, ran back to the woman whose cold face expressed no emotion. Not till a sentence in the strange tongue used between them had been spoken did he rise, with a sharp cry and hidden face, and rush from the chamber flinging to the door behind him.

The white face set in the flowing golden hair did not change a muscle at the forlorn cry. But with all her strength Cassandra pushed the silver mirror beside her, so that it might reflect the dark canal below. As she watched, the wavering reflections of the stars were blotted out by the slow shadow of a black-draped barge. On the prow the hired mourners sent a wailing music out on the night, and the candles of the acolytes on the priests' boat in the rear twinkled in the mirror to the shaming of the stars. Slowly in the mirror it passed, the lights, the dumb piping and drumming, and the priests pattering their beads. To the last Cassandra's eyes gazed on the bier high in the centre of the barge, seeing nothing of the writhen anguish of the dwarf crouched beside it, for looking at the form of the old dead man, stark, with the stars for death-candles and black night for mourner.

The barge crept slowly to the mirror's edge; the group on the prow vanished; and somewhere—was it

within the mirror or without that shut door?—there was a tramp of feet, and a blow, heavy and sudden as a deathstroke, fell. "Open, in the Name of the Ten!"

The paralysed woman turned her eyes quickly. In her strange loyalty to the Bonaventuri blood, she had forgotten to secure to herself the means of escape from the Capelli's vengeance which she had spoken of. Not one of her subtle poisons, with its dower of swift, painless death, was within reach.

"Open, in the Name of the Ten!"

She was trapped, Cassandra the star-gazer, sorceress, poisoner, trapped like the wild-beast doomed to be torn limb from limb. Would the Capelli delay her wedding-journey to witness

her victim's punishment? At the thought, Cassandra's low laughter stole out. The frail hands were at play again in the golden hair, twisting it into a gleaming rope.

The futile panels of the door crashed beneath the blows, and the officers of the Ten stepped gingerly over the broken woodwork. They came to a stand as the monks had done, their eyes on the woman leaning over the silver mirror. "In the Name of the Ten!" Their hands were on her shoulder as they spoke the words. The woman yielded to their strength; but the great gray eyes still stared into the silver mirror that, slanted awry, gave back nothing but a dead distorted face and a rope of golden hair twisted about the strangled throat.

*(To be continued.)*

## AN ANGLER'S PHILOSOPHY.

CLIFFORD and I had just returned from the water. We were staying at a country-house in the Highlands, and some of the other guests were at the door as we entered. They had been watching our approach up the drive, and we had prepared ourselves for the questioning which seldom fails the sportsman. Miss Lennox, young and impulsive, was the first to break covert with, "Well, what kind of a day have you had?" "Splendid," we answered quietly in unison.

"How many did you catch?" was of course the next question. After a slight pause, which might have been regarded as implying an incalculable take, we as quietly as before responded, "None," and smiled as we watched the effect. "Oh-h-h!" came with undisguised disappointment from Miss Lennox, whose fair face bore a perplexed look which mutely, but palpably, demanded explanation. "I thought you said you had had a splendid day," she went on, as, with the others, she looked at us for a puzzling pair indeed. Then Clifford, speaking with quiet deliberation, came in oracularly with, "My dear young lady, I would have you to know, that there is more in fishing than the mere catching of fish." And leaving her and the rest to digest this dictum as best they could, we passed indoors to dress for dinner.

Our words were as true as they were seemingly paradoxical. We had had a splendid day, and we had caught no fish. What of that? Had we not drunk deep of the delights of the riverside, delights

which can only be thoroughly appreciated by the fisherman who with his piscatorial eye (as my friend Clifford terms it) can discern beauties and possibilities in the plainest loch or stream. To him it is no mere physical feature of the landscape, but something to make acquaintance with, something to be investigated, plumbed, studied; what may not be hidden in its depths, be its aspect ever so unpromising? Standing the test satisfactorily it becomes human-like, a constant friend, varying, it may be, on the surface under storm or shine, as the best of friends will, but still essentially the same old trusted companion ever ready to afford solace and cheer. On this day we had seen our favourite river under the best conditions; everything was perfection to the piscatorial eye, and the æsthetic sense had been gratified by the glorious panorama of water, wood, and mountain unfolded to us as the wreaths of morning mist on the grand old Ben to the eastward gave way before the advancing sun. Perhaps indeed it was the sun that was to blame for our blank day, and we more than suspected it; but ever full of that hope without which an angler is an anchorless vessel indeed, we cheerfully persevered, the pleasure never becoming a toil on such a day when one felt that it was good to be alive. Led and encouraged by Hector McLeod, that most sanguine of gillies, we had tried here, there, and everywhere; he had told us on starting that it was a "perfect day for the watter," and he was determined to

justify his opinion before we had finished. But it was not to be. In vain we exhausted the whole entomology of the fly-book: that strange collection of impossible things undreamed of in the philosophy of Linneus or any other historian, natural or otherwise; but constituting the most delightful book for all that; many an angler reads no other, certainly none more charming.

And so it was now that, in our present check, Clifford and I by the aid of its illuminated pages fell back like superannuated veterans on our past triumphs, and singled out the weapons that had done mighty things on more fortunate days. How this Silver Doctor, now shabby with wear as some needy country practitioner, had finished off some half dozen promising grise and was still ready to be in at the death of others, —this was Clifford's way of putting it; how that Durham Ranger had found his way into our best fish of last season in that very pool now lying shimmering at our feet which to-day we have flogged and flogged without response. What matter, we mused, as we rested on the grassy slope above and appreciatively drank in something more than morning air as an accompaniment to our frugal luncheon, it would not do to catch fish every day; half of the satisfaction of success would vanish without its glorious uncertainty. Some people cannot understand this, and lacking the angler's temperament, most probably they never will. With inspiring memories evoked by the fisherman's breviary, and a lively anticipation of favours to come on the morrow, or "some ither day," we contented ourselves as we basked luxuriously in the noontide sun, the ceaseless music of the water now and again droning us right pleasantly into dreamland, tired but not

exhausted, and feeling all the sportsman's satisfaction in having done something, though we had nothing to show for it.

The same feeling, we knew, would accompany us home, and the river's monotone still haunting the ear would soothe us to the sleep which ever comes to the fisherman. It is indeed a sovereign cure for insomnia and may confidently be recommended to those whose heads lie uneasy, whether crowned, coroneted, or simply nightcapped. Possessing all that consoling philosophy which teaches the value of an occasional blank day in enhancing future fortune, we had sauntered home in a serenely happy frame of mind, in the full knowledge that we had enjoyed what we described to our friends as a splendid day.

Somewhat like these friends are the people, sportsmen or others, who are for ever telling the angler that they can "see nothing" in fishing. He might, of course, reply (Euclid permitting) that he can see still less in their pursuits; but that shallow retort would be unworthy of a sportsman, and eminently unworthy of a fisherman. His innate philosophy should engender toleration for the tastes of others. Better perhaps to reply in compromise by altering the famous dictum on beer into, "All sports are good, but some are better than others." Which though are the better ones? To narrow the question, which is the best? I think (Clifford always agreeing) that not a bad test of the matter is to consider which is the most lasting. In questions of pleasure does not Byron (somewhat of an authority) give that as the true criterion of merit? In this connection, however, it would perhaps be best to hasten from such an authority, that maligner of the craft, that irreverent iconoclast who could



even speak disrespectfully of the Piscator, Izaak of hallowed memory. One likes to fancy that, had this hasty lampooner lived to a more mature judgment, he might have repented him of his libels on the craft even to the extent of becoming a devotee himself. Stranger recantations have come about. Who knows that more sober years might have seen him a convert, with all the convert's Pauline thoroughness blessing what aforesaid he had damned and improving his time, temper, health and morals in the truly apostolic pursuit of fishing? It is indeed just as likely as not that his fifth decade would have witnessed him, returned like many another wanderer, rod in hand placidly and philosophically fishing his native Dee, and quietly reading the clean sweet Book of Nature in the tranquil spirit of his condemned Wordsworth?

Talking on this matter some days ago, Clifford thus summed it up:—"He was a mere boy after all, a fact often forgotten by his detractors; at least we should esteem him a mere boy in these days of sexagenarian under-secretaries, octogenarian statesmen and sportsmen; when a man is hardly regarded as having cut his wisdom-teeth until he has lost his whole set, and when we see frisky young blades of ninety odd taking unto themselves new wives of twenty and building new houses, goodness knows for what possible contingency." And as I nodded acquiescence, he went on: "Byron was a boy, and his deliverances on such a serious subject as fishing are of no more value than those of a green school-girl; it was beyond him. Then there's Johnson," he continued somewhat savagely "what did that old Fleet Street fogey [I am not responsible for Clifford's exact words] know about it? He seemed to think that all fishing was

done with a worm. It wouldn't matter the way of a trout's tail, only that his stupid old gibe has become a sort of half-brick to be heaved at our heads by the ignorant and the uninitiated." And Clifford blew a cloud of smoke as if to typify his value of such opinions. "It is only yesterday," he went on, "that Mrs. Devereux,—a woman whom I thought knew better, but I am afraid most women are hopeless—actually asked me the size of the worm with which I caught that splendid twenty-five pounder, you know, and she seemed quite astounded when I explained that in this case at any rate there had been no worm at one end. The old Johnsonian idea, you see. That's the way errors are perpetuated, in big as in small things. The injudicious generalisation of the epigrammatic ignoramus has much to answer for. Pithy and pointed, it makes its impression on soft brains just as easily as it slips off the tongue of the trifler."

I whistled quizzically at this, and Clifford laughed as I reminded him of "minnows talking like whales."

"Well, perhaps it is too big for the subject," he assented; "but as to Mrs. Devereux, I couldn't help giving her the quotation *ne sutor* (you know!), and as she apparently thought that I was referring to some strange bait, or talking my uncanny fish-jargon, I said, 'You know, Mrs. Devereux, there are as many kinds of fishing as there are of sewing,' and I left that to work its way into her domestic mind."

But this is becoming discursive, somewhat like a day's fishing itself; I have been wandering from the main river to whip a side stream. We were considering the relative lasting qualities of sports. Take some of the most prominent of them, such as hunting and shooting together with those more methodical games of the field, cricket and football, lawn-tennis and its

parlour parody being conveniently ignored. All these are sports of a season only; the irksome time-limit of age imposing itself on them all, sooner or later. Their annual vogue, too, is limited, whereas fishing, of one sort or another, is available right through the calendar, whether it is for the much honoured salmon (I gladly escape using the word *lordly*) in his season, or the plebeian pike and his yet humbler associates in theirs. As for hunting, it is true that many fine old boys to the end of their days make a show of parading in pink; but for the most part 'tis no more than a parade, as hollow in its way as that in Hyde Park of a Sunday when society carries its prayer-books in weekly penance. But good luck to the old boys for all that, say I! may their shadows never grow less nor yet their weights grow more. It is good to see them, ripe and ruddy, and better still to hear them laugh in the good old style, which, alas the day, threatens to become a lost art in these thin-faced, cold-blooded times.

But this is digressing again; soon indeed I shall be joining the old boys in an easy amble to the meet myself.

Shooting, too, has its veterans, more remarkable, however for their rarity than for their skill, the same limitation applying to the other sports I have specified; football indeed being absolutely beyond the pale of civilised discussion. But it may at once be said that fishing is for old as well as young, and that it makes the old young, and (paradoxically) the young old,—in wisdom and philosophy. A man's sight must be bad and his frame crazy indeed before he willingly relinquishes the rod with which Britannia-like he has so long ruled the water; and that the appetite grows by what it feeds on, I am convinced by dozens of cases.

Many anglers who in earlier years

were content with one day a week, now put in a full six, and eke a seventh did propriety and the police permit; but perhaps that is stretching a point, for it is well known that fishermen are a peculiarly pious folk. True, on one occasion I did hear a venerable grey-beard indulge in an anathema which would have belittled Athanasius himself; but that was over a salmon lost in signally aggravating circumstances, so bad that they must have appealed even to the recording angel. Certain it is that no mere effacing tear would have sufficed; at least a whole spongeful would have been required to wipe that sinner's slate clean.

So far from endangering the health of our evergreen enthusiasts, fishing is regarded by many of them as both a panacea and a prophylactic, a preventive no less potent than as a curative. As for exposure to the weather, and at times anglers have to face no little of it, the fisherman who caught a cold at the water-side has yet to be discovered. No doubt the engrossing nature of the sport has much to do with this; a striking instance of the power of mind over body. But therapeutics aside, can there really be anything more thoroughly absorbing than the sport of the angler? The devotees of other pursuits may find complete abstraction for a few hours at a stretch; but the angling day is only limited by the sun.

Not even the 21st of June is too long for fishing, so speedily does the time fly; as Clifford puts it (quoting I think from somebody) "A day is as nothing," so oblivious is the angler of its lapse. In this happy oblivion many restless minds have found a solace and a peace that passes the understanding of the uninitiated; many a sore troubled man has been saved from madness and worse by its kind nepenthe. One particular case comes to my mind, that of a man heavily

burdened with a great grief whose very nature almost forbade its relation to anyone however sympathetic. With this terrible internal pain gnawing at his heart and threatening to burst its very bonds, the sufferer walked about from day to day in a neighbourhood where he was newly come a stranger. The very sunlight seemed in conspiracy with the song of the birds to mock him as in the glorious June weather he groaned in the darkness of his soul. Fortunately for him it happened one day that, wandering along the bank of a charming south country river, he fell in with an old angler full of sweet content and happy serenity as he plied his rod, now and then brightening into boyish enthusiasm as he landed a fish.

Soon our melancholy friend caught the infection by sympathy, and noticing the complete absorption of the fisherman and his oblivion of all mundane affairs, began to ask himself if here was not something to soothe the wounded spirit. He would try at any rate, and with the help of the old angler, who proved as sympathetic as he was urbane, he learned enough of the rudiments of the art to make a beginning.

That night he went to bed full of his new-born enthusiasm, and bent on rising with the dawn to resume his pitch by the riverside. The long silent hours, hitherto so maddening, began to lose their terrors. Day after day found him at work; he had caught the fishing fever badly, and the one disease was fast driving the other out of his system. No apostle ever spread more salutary a gospel than that old angler, certainly none better in its results on the novitiate. Fishing indeed proved his salvation, for it enabled him to tide over his days of tribulation until Time the mighty healer completed the process. Then there was the case of

the late Henry Fawcett who, with that pathetic persistence so characteristic of the blind, still continued to pursue his dearly loved sport even under his grievous affliction. An angler who often accompanied him has told me how he directed him where to make his cast, with what skill this was obeyed, how persevering he was, and what pleasure he manifestly derived from this return, dimmed and partial as it was, to happier and brighter days.

Who will not acknowledge after this that there must be something in fishing? It is often assumed, and indeed openly asserted by those who do not fish, that anglers as a body are a dreamy, unpractical crew, and that they follow a pursuit unworthy of more vigorous natures. This at once betrays a misunderstanding of the true inwardness of fishing and of the temperament of its votaries. I have just endeavoured, and I hope not unsuccessfully, to demonstrate its power as a mental sedative and as a sovereign specific for the troubled; it being indeed the refuge of active minds, preserving their balance while yet gently exercising them with the most salutary of hygiene. Many of the world's greatest intellects have found this, as well as many of the most practical men of business.

Numberless instances could be cited were it not for the risk of making this paper a barren though instructive catalogue of impressive names,—a mere piscatorial peerage in fact. Let it suffice that the names of many of our most successful ambassadors of commerce, whom no one would dub *unpractical*, as well as ambassadors of courts, together with the most venturesome of warriors,—Nelson for example—may be read on the long roll; in fishing they have found a refuge from the distractions of a

carrying world, and in the return to Nature a wholesome antidote to its artificialities and guile. Experience has taught them that often it is well indeed for man to be alone, if only to escape the banalities and ineptitudes of what so often passes as conversation, and which are a true weariness of the spirit to the really practical man.

In addition to what may be termed the extraneous pleasures of the sport, such as communion with Nature and the love for her which grows with acquaintance, the study of one's angling fellows is not the least entertaining. There is a freemasonry in the craft which assists towards this; one has only to exhibit an intelligent interest in it to succeed in unlocking the lips and the heart of its votary. I am mindful to use the qualifying adjective, for there are seeming exceptions to this rule; but it will generally be found that the fisherman who is characterised as ill-tempered or boorish only resents the inapposite questions and comments of the thoughtless or the ignorant. With such people he has been known to manifest what may be mildly described as impatience, which in its gentlest form may find expression in grunts more or less inarticulate. Possibly indeed he may decline to vouchsafe even this form of reply, and will there and then be written down a bear, and another instance of the awful degeneration into which fishing leads a man. But only rub him the right way, with question sweetly reasonable and comment discerning, and he will purr you as soft as any Persian.

Then there are the gillies. What a study they provide, differing so much individually, and yet collectively so alike in their conservatism in matters of sport. I have mentioned that optimistic henchman

Hector McLeod, one never to be dismayed by wind, water, or weather, ever full of cheery promise, no matter what the outlook. With him every day is the "finest morn for fushin" that ever dawned, every night full of promise for the day to come. What an enthusiast he is, fairly dancing with glee as each fish is grassed, and bubbling over with congratulations, invariably declaring that it is the "graundest saumon he ever gaffed," for beauty, if not for size. "Oh, I don't think much of it, Hector," Clifford will say, with just the right touch of self-abnegation. "Weel perhaps no," says Hector slowly after a pause. "I've seen bigger, but never a one more beautiful. Look at his condition, why he's as hard and bright as new siller." We are used to this, and know exactly what is coming.

I verily believe that, nominally Presbyterian though he be, fishing is his religion; one thing certain is that he regards it as a divine panacea with which there is no danger of an overdose.

"But Hector," said Clifford one day, "supposing a man is thoroughly worn out at the game, has been at it day after day and has had quite too much of it?" "Too much fushin'!" echoed Hector incredulously. "Yes, Hector, is it not possible to imagine such a case?" The worthy gillie looked as if imagination failed him, for he only shook his head dubiously. "Suppose, then, that I say I have met a man who was sick and tired of it, what would you recommend?" pursued Clifford. Hector's reply was as brief as dogmatic, "More fushin'!" Here we got his confession of faith in two words, and it may truly be said that he seems to live up to it.

As a contrast to the sanguine effervescence of Hector we have the

grim dourness of Donald McNeil, who never waxes enthusiastic about anything, keen fisherman though he be. When in more restful humour we are glad to have him as an escape from the buoyant and bustling Hector, and in his way he provides us with at least as much entertainment, though it is not so easily come by, and perhaps therefore the more valued when it does come. His complete lack of enthusiasm when we are exulting in the triumph of capture is, to say the least, aggravating, but with him, in fishing as in everything else, the *nil admirari* rules strong. "Now you must acknowledge that's a fine fish," said Clifford the other day, nettled at Donald's inappreciative reception of a bonny twelve-pounder; "come now!" After some hesitation Donald allowed that it was a "pretty genteel" one, genteel being his ultimate adjective of approbation. "Pretty genteel one!" echoed Clifford with some irritation; "I should think so indeed. I don't believe, Donald, that you would show any surprise if I were to bring you the sea-serpent. Now would you?" Donald ruminated. I should explain that he uses tobacco in a form which gives rise to much rumination and to considerable hesitation in his replies, his sentences being punctuated in a manner which I need not further indicate. Clifford, who, as only half a Scot, is somewhat cynical as to the natives, will have it that this very prevalent habit is wholly due to the Scotchman's inherent desire to get as much as possible out of everything, not to waste anything in mere smoke so to speak, and that saving the expense of a pipe in no way detracts from its allurements. We waited for a reply to the last question, wondering how Donald would meet it. Clifford is very persistent even in the smallest

things, so he repeated: "You would not be surprised if I were to show you the sea-serpent, would you, Donald?" With perfect gravity the reply came: "Ye'd have to catch him first."

Encouraged by this, Clifford went on. "What kind of a fly would you recommend for him, Donald?" There followed much silent rumination. At length he spoke: "Is't what sort of a flee ye'd require for the sea-serpent?" This with much trilling of r's. "Yes, Donald," said Clifford encouragingly. "Weel," the reply came very slowly, "that would all depend on the state of the watter!" We looked at Donald's face; it was as grimly rigid as ever, nor did it alter in response to our laughter. Apparently he saw no absurdity in question or answer. Now, can this be sheer imperviousness, or should Donald, like many another Scot of his kind, be counted a humorist of the truest and rarest genus, those who never laugh at their own sallies? The matter gives me doubts, and provides yet another Celtic mystery.

One day, when more than usually exasperated by his phlegmatic demeanour and his lugubrious prophecies of sport, Clifford said pettishly: "Why Donald, I would sooner have Hector McLeod with us. He's a proper sort of a chap, cheers us up, and never, like you, throws cold water on the fish we catch." It was perhaps a weak expression; whether for this or not I cannot say, but Donald came in quickly with, "And whenever did ye see me throw cold watter on ye'r fish?" For a moment we really suspected him of a repartee, but there was no indication of it in his face, which was rather more dour than usual, except for a flicker of genuine interrogation.

"Yes, Hector's the chap," resumed Clifford somewhat maliciously, "he's

a fine sportsman and a braw lad, isn't he, Donald?" Donald shook his head slowly as if he could say much. "Don't you think he is, Donald?" continued Clifford pertinaciously. Donald's only reply was the somewhat vigorous expulsion of an exhausted bolus of tobacco, and its replacement by a new one. Seeing that Clifford was bent on a reply, and being used to his tenacity by this time he came in slowly with: "Weel he's all right in his way; but he's no much of a mon anyhow." And Donald looked as though he could say still more. "Why, what's wrong with him?" asked Clifford with genuine curiosity. "That's the first I have heard against him." Donald, leaning against a rock, looked meditatively at his boots as he kicked them together and repeated slowly: "He's not much of a mon anyhow." Could there be some grave moral dereliction, or at least some countryside scandal associated with the hitherto unsullied Hector? With some misgivings we pressed for an explanation. After much thought, Donald prepared to speak; we always know when this is going to happen for there is a calming of the elements in his mouth which inevitably precedes speech, just as a locomotive engine quietyens down when it really means to start. "What do you know, or what have you heard of Hector?" asked Clifford. "Weel," said Donald, speaking with an aggravating slowness, which might have been taken for unwillingness to blacken the face of a comrade, "I was tell't by a girl at the fairmhouse where he lodges that—" "You were told by a girl?" interrupted Clifford eagerly. "Ha,

this is getting interesting; but proceed, Donald." "I was tell't," resumed Donald beginning all over again, "by a girl at the fairmhouse where he lodges, that he taks—" "Now don't go on, Donald," again interjected Clifford; "perhaps we had better not hear what he takes; a kiss no doubt, if she is a bonnie lass. Let us change the subject; it is only petty scandal after all."

But encouraged thus far into loquacity Donald was not to be denied, and speaking quickly lest Clifford should again check him, he rapped out, "She tell't me that he taks sugar in his parritch!" We stared at Donald, and finding his face absolutely serious we burst into Homeric laughter, he regarding us with something like pained surprise for not estimating at its true enormity the sacrilege of seasoning Scotia's oatmeal with anything else than its native salt. And truly, on reflection, it is a sacrilege; but hardly such a one as to cast obloquy and suspicion on our esteemed friend Hector.

These two gillies have afforded us not a little sport other than piscatorial; but there are others also, whose sayings and doings would need more space than is available here. They provide one of those concomitants of the fisherman's life which go to compensate him for many a blank day, just as they assist in establishing the truth of that postulate of my friend Clifford: "There is more in fishing than the mere catching of fish."

VALLON HARDIE.



## THE PASSING SHOW.

THE comprehensive subject of Past and Present has been treated by Carlyle in his masterly style exclusively from the human point of view, with the natural limitations of the deep and earnest philosopher whose proper study is mankind and not its insignificant belongings. It is true that in SARTOR RESARTUS he deals with metaphorical clothes old and new; but as a rule the significance of old lumber, old furniture, even of old houses, the empty shells on the shore of the sea of life, does not seem to have appealed to his imagination. In a certain sense Past and Present is in all cases too limited a purview; the present is really nothing more than the flashing instant uniting the Past and the Future; it can have no history or actual associations as it has no separate existence. In reality we can only compare the Past, of which we know so little, with the Future of which we know nothing, supplementing our want of knowledge by as much imagination as we can command, subject to its being able to stand the test of probability.

We cannot all be Carlyles,—which from one point of view is not to be regretted; but even observers of a much more modest calibre can feel the melancholy aspect of old castles and ruins, the mingled pathos and humour of old curiosity shops and second-hand emporiums. It is a regrettable fact that our belongings, our movable property, the inanimate things that in a measure make our life what it is, should last so much longer than we do. This watch of mine will some day tick in a strange waistcoat-

pocket; after many successive owners have wound it up, when it can go no longer, when there are perhaps no more waistcoats, it may find its way to a museum of the future, say in the twenty-fifth century, labelled *Time-keeper of the Victorian Age*; and some bright girl of the period may in passing remark: "What funny people they must have been to carry such queer things!"

So far as our personal belongings are concerned, we must submit to be pitied by our descendants. There is no help for that; but we could assure the young lady of the future that we are not so very funny, that at all events we are not aware of the fact, and take life seriously enough. Though we cannot make for ourselves the slightest idea of what she herself will be like in dress, customs, and manners, we can assure her we were people very much like herself, and in some respects perhaps better. Our views of life and of its earthly future may be wrong, but it is to be feared that much of what now makes life still bearable will be squeezed out of it in her time. Ten to one she will have eaten a municipal breakfast, not of her own choosing, before she came to the museum to study there by order of the city authorities; or she will presently return to a municipal lunch, selected, ordered, and prepared for her by the State as being the best for her digestion. It may not be much to boast of, but thank goodness we still eat and drink what we like. It will remain on record that we had still some remnants of individuality left in us when this

queer-looking timekeeper was ticking in our pocket; and the young lady with her flying and walking appliances, State Communism, artificial food, machine-made atmosphere, and what not, may not be any the happier for having some electrical contrivance to tell her the time without looking. She is growing taller day by day,—this we already know; by careful training and selection she may come to be seven feet high, if there be any advantage in that. More beautiful than the young women of the twentieth century she cannot be, though she may know to a fraction how many red corpuscles go to the surface inch of her delicate complexion, the weight and force of the sunrays that fall on her pretty head, the number of long silken hairs on it, and sundry other lively bits of knowledge that may make her life so happy and gay,—or the reverse, as may possibly be the case.

Let us hope no young girl will make any such slighting and flippant remark on what may be left of our property after so many years; but we have ourselves been guilty of the same thoughtless and mistaken criticism, in museums and other places of antiquarian interest. I remember only last summer seeing an ancient head-piece in a pawnbroker's shop in Derby town,—a sort of helmet, a morion, I think they called it—and wondering what a queer and ignorant head must once have been inside that iron pot, what its owner would have said of the vast establishments of the Midland Railway hard by, and what his thoughts would be if he could see his morion hanging there, labelled *Genuine*, 4s. 6d., *Cheap*. Of one thing we may be sure; the man to whom it belonged did not think the morion would ever be out of fashion.

It was genuine enough, no doubt, so far as that goes, though one has

heard of factories for the supply of genuine antiquities before now. Our own hats will make a sufficiently queer figure in the museum some day; let us hope they will be genuine and not a clever forgery, and looking at them now, impartially, one does not think it would be worth while. The young lady need not laugh when she comes to the hat-rack of the Victorian Age, for indeed we are by no means proud of our headgear in the present day. Were it not that already now so much individual liberty is lost, many would prefer wearing the morion as perhaps more becoming, as cheap, too, and, though old, warranted to last some time yet, the more so as we are very careful of our heads nowadays, and iron coverings would last us longer than they did when they were in the fashion, and when the custom was to try to break them together with the head inside.

Neither Mr. Wells nor Mr. Bellamy, in their wonderful stories of the days to come, have told us of the surprise in store for him, should the dreamer, among the bewildering marvels of future ages, suddenly come upon a pair of his own boots, ticketed *Genuine*, at some incomprehensible sum of money. We shall never see such an extraordinary thing; but who shall say that as a plain matter of fact it will not be visible some day? This is an instance of the imagination that can stand the test of probability.

That helmet, as a remnant of barbarous and tumultuous days when such a protection was a necessity of daily life, tends to prove that we are slowly advancing towards an era of universal peace, towards the Millennium in fact. The tendency in this direction has not been very apparent lately, but the backsliding can only be for a time, for though appearances may be against us, we are progressing,—this is somehow the generally

accepted theory. Rousseau, to be sure, did not think so when he formulated his famous theory that Civilisation is Retrogression; he would have drawn another lesson from that morion, would have looked at it in quite another light, so true it is that sermons of entirely contradictory tendencies can be preached from one and the same antique text. Rousseau is, however, at a considerable discount in our ultra optimistic days, though we do not really believe that our Present is already a satisfactory instalment of the perfection that is to come. We know very well that an earthly paradise was lost to us for good and all in the beginning, not to be regained or reconstructed by all the scientific discoveries and appliances in the world, and that our chances of again finding the way and of entering it once more, say on a motor car, are of the faintest. The unconscious progress of our race towards an unknown goal will remain a puzzle so long as the world lasts; and as we do not know where we are going, it is no wonder that we so often take the wrong turning.

Our descendants will not be able to moralise very much in this way on our dwellings; for these are too unsubstantial to last, and we of the present day cannot say in what direction the progress of house-building, as now understood, will affect them. Progress, as we consider it now, is in the lath and plaster line, the material limits of which would almost seem to have been reached. It may be in the power of future generations to make laths still thinner, plaster still more crumbling; or they may come to the rational conclusion that some ways of progress are undesirable, that this was one of the inevitable wrong turnings. They may prefer to live in huge substantial communistic dwellings, owned and erected by the State, each man

in his own little stone cell like the animals that make the coral reefs,—though that again would be a kind of progress looking remarkably like retrogression.

Taking a synthetic view of the human race from a great distance, it would appear that we belong to the class of creatures distinguished in Natural History by building themselves homes for families and colonies, like some of the Polyzoa; differing from the snails, hermit-crabs, and the like, who have a separate home for every individual. To the fanciful definition of Man as a cooking or laughing animal might very well be added that of being the animal which does not build its own house, but gets somebody else to build it for him. And starting from this proposition no one will deny the tremendous importance of the builder in our Social Economy, and the mistake of slighting this indispensable individual by applying to him the opprobrious epithet of jerry-builder, as if he did not follow his instinct as conscientiously as the beaver or the bird. Beavers build strongly and lastingly because the conditions of the race demand it. Birds construct only for a season; and Jerry builds for a few years only because his instinct tells him that the human individual soon gets tired of things and will be asking for a new house.

The moment such a new house is finished, a human family comes to look at it and takes possession. But we are an orderly and law-abiding race, and cannot invade the premises (as does the hermit-crab) without some formalities in which another individual, the house-agent to wit, plays his part, again strictly according to his nature and his inherited instinct. One would hardly believe it possible that such ingrained, enviable optimism could exist, but everything

looks rose-coloured in an estate-agent's eyes; he would have described the pillar of Saint Simeon Stylites as a compact, eligible, and not overlooked residence in a quiet neighbourhood. Since nature has gifted him with this enviable quality, it is strange that when he wants a house for himself he manages to do such violence to that kindly instinct.

When Jerry builds you a house which he knows can never withstand the winds of adversity,—a rickety shell of a thing, built on the principle and somewhat after the form of a house of cards,—he takes a most expensive frieze or dado to the drawing-room, a frieze which seduces the lady; a monumental chimney-piece of many-coloured marbles for the dining-room, which seduces the gentleman, and the trick is done. The agent spreads the golden glamour of his fertile imagination over it all,—and in three years' time you want another house. The new dwelling may possess all the solid advantages which the old one lacked; but you will never cease to regret that wonderful mantelpiece and that lovely frieze.

All this is unavoidable; we cannot go against nature, and nature has created the agent, the builder, and the tenant on immovable lines of evolution. Of course there may be what naturalists call *sports*. Wendell Holmes has told us of a sailor in New England who built a house for himself entirely with his own hands. Fearfully out of the perpendicular it was, clumsy and rough to a degree; but fancy the delight of the man when his laborious task was ended! It was all his very own, every stone, every window and every plank the result of his own handiwork; and not for a moment did the thought occur to him that he was a monster, a sport, a man who in his own small way had done as much as man can do to fly in the

face of Providence, a would-be disturber of a well-regulated Cosmos.

This high view, we can have no doubt whatever, was entertained concerning this man's doings by the proper constitutional builders of New England; but whether they were aware of the intricate cosmic and scientific reasons they had for their objections, must be more than doubtful, the Jerries of this world not being burdened with more scientific understanding than they can reasonably bear. Men of action are not usually men of thought.

What we can gather from the dwellings of our forefathers that have been preserved for us is that they were wonderfully strong and noble piles, though singularly uncomfortable to live in according to our modern ideas of comfort. The massive, crenelated walls of Haddon Hall, which I saw with the impression of that morion still strong upon me, carry one back in spirit to those lawless, tumultuous days. The very owner of that helmet has perhaps tried to scale them, lies perhaps deep under the surface of the wide castle moat. With its mysterious moss-grown terraces, flanked by old, gnarled, grey-stemmed trees, it is a strangely realistic and living remainder of feudal times. The hall, the wide oaken stairs, the prison, the Eagle Tower, every stone and each detail suggest power, greatness, durability,—and where is it all! This is no ruined castle open to the winds of heaven, only to be reconstructed by archaeological learning and a fanciful imagination; it is, on the contrary, as if a wizard with magic wand had called forth from the shadowy past a castle of the Middle Ages, complete as it stood. That is the haunting impression it conveys, as if the wanderer in its deserted halls were under an enchanter's spell. If this feudal keep,

with its tapestries, its stately beds still decked with green and white velvet and satin, be a reality, what then was the ghostlike, evanescent procession of phantom nobles and ladies that haunted this concrete reality once upon a time! The sensation this forcible juxtaposition of the Present and the Past gives us is not quite a pleasant one. The dead might well bury their dead; this old baronial hall is dead, and should have disappeared together with its dead and gone owners, for it is now of the nature of a *memento mori*, recalling too vividly to a workday world how shadowy and dreamlike our life really is; though we cannot deny, no more than we can explain, the exquisite beauty we see in this ancient home of a proud race, in this wonderful shell left on the sands by the retreating waters of life. But sit by the side of the little postern gate adjoining the meadow, alone; look up at the wall from the top of which arrows and bullets and firebrands may have fallen on besieging foes,—how still it all is! How very faint and far away the echoes of the stress and strife of the ages gone by! Hear the trees, overshadowing the proud motto *Ware the Vernon!* rustle and speak in whispers in the evening breeze,—a sound alway suggestive and full of melancholy meaning—and you will leave the ancient home of the Vernons with a curiously mixed feeling, with a certain undefinable, uneasy sense of discomfort to the mind.

They tell you that Mrs. Radcliffe frequently passed silent nights, alone, in Haddon Hall, for the sake of romantic inspiration when writing *THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO*. It is a privilege that cannot in the nature of the thing appeal or be granted to everyone who cannot honestly say he is writing the *Mysteries of Anybody* in particular; but if anyone should

be so old-fashioned as to write *Mysteries* now, he might do worse than apply for a night's lodging here. The strangely unfamiliar surroundings, the ghostlike associations, the tapestries waving to and fro in the draught caused by the night breeze, the fitful moonlight streaming through latticed windows and lighting up unexpected grotesque carvings or ancient portraits, with an occasional dog howling on the hillside,—there surely would be enough, and more than enough, for the conception of the ghastliest *Mysteries*.

Many whose own mysteries are quite enough for them may have forgotten this no doubt remarkable work, may not remember who this Udolpho was. Perhaps this gentleman from Italy was haunted;—what of that? We are all of us haunted, by the Future and by the Past. I myself have been haunted by the ghosts of all the Vernons that have passed in succession through those echoing rooms and passages: whose eyes have gazed at those tapestries with their Acteons and Dianas as we have gazed at them; who danced and made love and made merry, passing and vanishing ghosts as they were. *Ware the Vernon!* Were they about me, curiously wondering at me as I did about them? We are but flitting ghosts ourselves, passing like shadows, haunting this old mansion to-day in spirit, as we visit the museum of the future. No mystery that confronted Udolpho can for a moment be compared with the great mystery of the sea of life, on the shore of which this old castle is left stranded.

There is very little romance left in our prosaic days; and yet, rightly considered, what else is there that makes life worth living? An hour of sunshine is followed by a day of rain; only in the ideal, in the fantastic

if you like, in romance, in poetry and art, do we find the everlasting sunshine we all crave for. It must be evident that it can only be romance which gives beauty and interest to such relics of former days, an interest which is clearly and exclusively subjective, not objective in the least; for this pile of stones, if it should be nothing else, is not even symmetrically arranged and answers to no canon of premeditated art; if it had no history or associations, no ideal atmosphere in the mind, it would be swept away to-morrow as so much rubbish, as a useless thing of no value that cumberes the earth. And if now already the deadening influence of facts, figures, and statistics is so strong that rather than hear about Dorothy Vernon who eloped through that same little postern gate (we are confidently told that Dorothy never eloped at all!), we greatly prefer to know the precise height in feet and inches of the Eagle Tower, the number of stones in the walls, the exact tale of steps, and the cubic measurement of the enormous kitchens,—how hopelessly colourless and prosaically statistical will the Future be! What progress can be looked for in this direction, and what more is left for the young lady that is to come? The smallest item of fact to-day is registered for our information as if only in facts could there be salvation. The tallest chimney in the world (with illustrations); the

smallest house in England (with illustrations); the fastest railway in the United Kingdom, the number of bricks used in the building of Buckingham Palace, what more in the way of informative fact will be left for future generations to read about? Will they always anxiously study and consider the exact number of pieces and fragments of which a Stradivarius is composed, without caring to hear the soft music that makes us dream of things beyond our ken?

Is there then no balm in Gilead? There is. Whisper it not in Gath, but that now imaginary but one day to be real young lady of flesh and blood, is just as likely to elope as Dorothy Vernon for a certainty did, as some very nice girls may be trying to do this very day. It is an irregular proceeding, not to be openly countenanced, but a vein of irregularity will and must run through the best regulated human family if we are to remain human at all. This may be looked upon as the link which happily unites the Past and the Future, which gives us a fellow-feeling for our rude forefathers, and makes us hope that the future will perhaps not be entirely without romance, and will not perhaps be altogether so black as it is sometimes painted. So long as there are Dorothy Vernons with laughing eyes and loving hearts in the land, romance will never be far away.

MARCUS REED.



## THE LIFE OF A LOWER DECK SAILOR.

THOSE wise people who write reviews for the newspapers rightly point out the especial merit of books about the sea whose authors are happily endowed with practical experience as well as the literary faculty. Of late this combination, thanks to the school-master, has become by no means rare; a book by a sailor is no longer a novelty, and if Dana's *TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST* had been issued within the last few years, instead of sixty years ago, it would have attracted considerably less attention.

The life of a lower deck sailor, as told by himself in a little book published by Blackwood in 1822, ought to have sold well; yet I cannot find that it made any mark, though it is a narrative as full of interest as any true story of the sea yet printed. In proof of this, though the book is quite forgotten now and unknown to less than one in a million readers, I have often met, in other writers, with unacknowledged extracts from it.

John Nichol was born near Edinburgh in 1755. His father, who was a cooper and a man of some education, being anxious that his children should improve their positions in life, stinted himself to give them a good schooling. The eldest (we are not told by what means) became a lieutenant in the Navy and died of wounds in the West Indies; another son went to America and was never afterwards heard of, while John was apprenticed to his father's trade, but preferred to spend his time among sailors and in boats. When fourteen years of age young Nichol accompanied his father to London on business. It was the year

1769, remembered for a great storm on the Yorkshire coast, and the little sailing-vessel which carried them to the Thames encountered and rode out the gale that had strewn the shore with the wrecks of thirty ships and scores of drowned seamen. This experience did not prejudice the lad against the sea; it is more likely that the little vessel's brave and successful fight influenced him the other way. The least imaginative old salt that ever growled at a sea-life has often, amid the howling of the gale, felt some compensating thrills in the even pitch and roll and dry deck that betoken a staunch ship and a skilful skipper.

On arrival in London young Nichol, while his father was attending to his business, spent his time wandering by the river near the Tower. One day, seeing a dead monkey floating on the dirty water, he instantly stripped and swam for it. The moment he landed a little cockney boy demanded the prize or a fight for it. Scotty was willing, and after a severe contest, fought naked and wet as he had come out of the Thames, he carried off the dead monkey, receiving a thrashing from his father for his folly.

After a while father and son returned to Scotland; John completed his apprenticeship at Borrowstowness, worked a few months as journeyman, then threw coopering to the winds in the year 1776 and entered as a volunteer on a tender lying in Leith Roads. The crew were mostly impressed men, and soon after joining she sailed for the Nore with a large party to reinforce the crews of the Fleet. Among the men were a gang

of smugglers who had been captured after a desperate resistance a few days before, and who on the passage discovered among the impressed men the fellow who had informed on them. The unfortunate wretch was nearly killed by them before the ship's officers could rescue him. When the tender arrived at the Nore the captain of the smugglers was taken on shore under writ of *habeas corpus* for debt,—as Nichol surmises, an ingenious method of saving the man, employed, no doubt, by some in high place who had benefited by his cargoes.

Nichol was appointed to the *PROTEUS*, a twenty-gun ship, bound for New York and Quebec, with ordnance stores and a hundred soldiers for the floating batteries on Lake Champlain. The greater number of the smugglers, who turned out stout, active, experienced seamen, were sent to the same ship. Nichol's decent upbringing made the lower deck of a man-of-war a miserable home for him, and he was heartily thankful when a few days after joining he was appointed cooper and allowed to mess with the ship's steward. The only event worth recording on this voyage was the ill health of the troops, told in one graphic sentence: "We threw overboard every morning a soldier or a sheep."

Having discharged her stores and disembarked what remained of the soldiers the *PROTEUS* sailed for the West Indies. At St. Kitts Captain Robinson went ashore in his gig, manned entirely by the ex-smugglers, to whom the skipper had taken a fancy. So soon as the captain's back was turned every man of them, including the coxswain, bolted. That night, while the pursuit was still hot, they seized a boat, rowed over to St. Eustatia, and there captured an American vessel, sailed her to one of

the French islands, and were never afterwards heard of.

Nichol saw something of the sadness of slavery. On Sunday female slaves brought fruit off to the ship and remained on board until the Monday morning, when their owner, or overseer, came with his whip and drove them ashore. One morning this fellow cruelly flogged a sick woman; she shrieked, and at that moment,—no one saw how it happened—one of the crew picked him up and threw him overboard. A slave in a boat alongside leaped after her tyrant, and just as he was sinking for the last time saved his life. No doubt, as Nichol says, he whipped her none the less often.

Noticing how the negroes buried their dead with only a few inches of earth over them, and seeing the land-crabs feeding on the decaying bodies, Nichol asked a black fellow how it was that land-crabs were eaten and esteemed a luxury. "Why, they eat me!" was the answer.

The *PROTEUS* next sailed for Newfoundland, where Nichol was transferred to the *SURPRISE*, a twenty-eight gun frigate. In this vessel he saw some fighting, for she captured in the course of her commission a number of American privateers. One of these was the *JASON*, commanded by the famous Manly, whose gallant defence won the admiration of Captain Reeves of the *SURPRISE*. On the surrender of the *JASON* Reeves handed back the American skipper his sword; as he did so he noticed that part of the brim of the American's hat was shot away, and remarked, "You have had a narrow escape, Manly." "I wish to Heaven it had been my head," answered the sturdy fellow.

Many of the crew of the *SURPRISE* were wild Irishmen who fought like devils, and were great favourites with the captain on that account. In the

middle of the engagement Nichol heard several of them calling, "Halloo, Bungas, where are you?" He looked at their gun and saw the two horns of his cooper's anvil across its muzzle; the next moment it was through the JASON's side. "Bungas for ever!" they shouted when they saw what a dreadful hole this extraordinary shot had made in the hull of the American.

When the JASON was boarded they found serving in her as marines thirty-one cavalymen who had deserted from Burgoyne's army. Among the prize-crew was a decent, well-educated young fellow named Kennedy, who was placed sentry over the spirit-room; being easy-going and inexperienced he allowed the men to carry away the spirits, and the prize-crew were fast getting drunk when the prize-master perceived what was going on. For this Kennedy was tried by court-martial and sentenced to be hanged at the fore-yard arm of the flagship. His offence was, of course, very serious, for if the Americans had risen on the drunken prize-crew they would certainly have recovered their vessel. In consideration of Kennedy's youth and previous good conduct petitions were drawn up and every endeavour made to obtain a mitigation of the sentence; but the admiral would not answer them. The prisoner was taken to the place of execution, the rope was round his neck, the clergyman at his post, and all hands of the ships in harbour on deck or aloft, waiting to see the prisoner run up to the yard amid the smoke of the gun, the signal of death for which the match was already lighted,—when the admiral pardoned him.

Soon after this the SURPRISE, while on a cruise, captured an American of a different character. The privateer was commanded by a man named Revel, and on his surrendering he was

ordered to keep under the quarter of the SURPRISE, as the weather would not admit of boats being lowered. As the privateer sailed alongside, the darkness of night fell upon the sea and her hull could only be made out with difficulty. Then the Englishmen heard voices hailing which, in the howling of the gale, could scarcely be distinguished. At length it was made out that the American captain was about to make some British prisoners, that were on board of his vessels, walk the plank. Captain Reeves ordered the privateer to desist and hoist a light in her maintop or he would sink her. A light was accordingly placed upon a float and cast adrift, but again the voices made themselves heard and warned the SURPRISE of the trick. Thereupon Reeves told the American that he would instantly fire if the privateer was not at once brought under the lee of the SURPRISE. This brought Revel to reason, and when daylight came the weather moderated and the Americans, with their British prisoners, were taken on board the SURPRISE. Nichol relates that Revel was a coarse, ill-looking fellow, whose behaviour was duly rewarded, for while Manly messed with Captain Reeves, Revel was left to his own devices on the lower deck among the seamen prisoners.

The SURPRISE returned to England, and then made another voyage to St. John's with a convoy. One of the merchant-vessels was called the ARK, commanded by a man named Noah. On the passage this ship fell in with an American privateer equal in weight of metal but with forty-five of a crew while NOAH'S ARK, as of course she was called, had only sixteen men. The gallant Noah gave battle, and Reeves in the SURPRISE stood by and did not interfere. The ARK won and by the consent of the crew Captain

Reeves gave the prize to Noah, who carried her in triumph to Halifax and sold her.

In the harbour of St. John's one of the crew of the *SURPRISE* was whipped through the fleet for theft, and the poor wretch, to drown his sufferings, had drunk a whole bottle of rum a little before the punishment. After he had been flogged alongside of two ships, the captain noticed that he was drunk and gave the order to stop the punishment until he became sober. He was rowed back to the *SURPRISE*,

his back swelled like a pillow, black and blue; some sheets of thick blue paper in vinegar were laid on, before this he appeared insensible, now his shrieks rent the air. When better he was sent to the ship abreast of which his punishment had been stopped, and it was there renewed and so finished.

In due course the *SURPRISE* returned to England and cruised in the Channel, where she made several captures, one the *DUKE OF CHARTRES*, an eighteen-gun ship. She was then chased into Mount's Bay on the coast of Cornwall by a French sixty-four.

We ran close in shore [writes Nichol], and were covered by the old fort which had not fired a ball since the time of Cromwell, but it did its duty nobly. All night the Frenchman kept up his fire, the fort and the *SURPRISE* answering it. When day dawned he sheered off, and we had only suffered a little in our rigging. The only blood shed on our side was that of an old fogie of the fort who was shot by his own gun.

The *SURPRISE* was paid off in March, 1783. When Captain Reeves came ashore he completely loaded the long boat with flags he had taken from the enemy; on being asked what he would do with them he answered laughing, "I will hang one upon every tree in my father's garden." So soon as he was paid

off Nichol hurried to London where, after a few days' enjoyment, he took passage in a coach for the north, intending to visit his home. On the way he and his chum Jack Williams fell in love with two young sisters, who were fellow-passengers to Newcastle. The girls gave them considerable encouragement, and when the coach reached Newcastle, Williams was so infatuated that he left it and took lodgings at an inn, that he might court his charmer, who was the daughter of a farmer in the neighbourhood. Nichol continued his journey, and on his arrival at Borrowstowness found that his father was dead. After three weeks at home he set off for Newcastle to join Williams and court the farmer's daughter; but on his arrival at the inn his mate pulled a long face,—the girls would have nothing to say to him. Nichol decided to see for himself how the land lay and went out to the farm. The girls cut him dead, and the farmer coming in while he was there, promptly ordered him to take himself off.

His money being by this time nearly at an end, he set out for London, where he shipped on a Greenland whaler. His adventures in this vessel are not worth reprinting. After more than one narrow escape in the ice the ship in due course arrived in the Thames where she missed stays, struck on the Isle of Dogs and filled, but all hands saved themselves and their belongings.

His next voyage was to the West Indies where he improved his acquaintance with the negroes, and records the opinion of one who saw Rodney defeat the French off St. Kitts: "The French 'tand 'tiff, but the English 'tand far 'tiffer; de all de same as game cock, de die on de 'pot." One of the negroes, hearing that there was a Welshman among

the crew, asked Nichol what kind of people they were, whereupon the inquirer was referred to another black fellow who had been in England and thought himself a great authority; "The English," replied this oracle, "have ships, so have the Irish, so have the Scotch, but Welshmen have no ships,—they are like negro men, live in the bush." The ship brought home with her as passenger a planter who had been a common seaman on a man-of-war; he had deserted, married a free black woman who kept a punch-house, and left him £3,000 on her death. With this he had bought a plantation and slaves, and had become a very rich man.

Nichol's next voyage was in the KING GEORGE which, with the QUEEN CHARLOTTE, formed the well known voyage of discovery described from the names of the captains, as Portlock's and Dixon's. In this ship he visited Hawaii and other of the Pacific islands and China, and tells many interesting anecdotes. His ship was the first to touch at Owhyee after the massacre of Cook. The only item of his description of this long voyage worth reprinting is this:

We had on board the chief who killed Captain Cook. He stayed for three weeks. He was in bad health and had a smelling-bottle with a few drops in it which he used to smell at; we filled it for him. There were a good many bayonets in possession of the natives, which they had obtained at the murder of Cook.

While at Whampoa his dog bit a Chinese boy. The father asked for a few hairs from under the animal's fore leg to stick on the wound and cure the bite, which custom of the Chinese appears to be the origin of a saying well known to persons whose "evening potations create unpleasant morning reflections."

Nichol returned to England in

1788, and after a voyage to New South Wales on board a convict transport, which has been described elsewhere, he shipped on a South Sea whaler and while on the South American coast fell in with a few adventures. At Payta a boat came off and asked if there were any Scotchmen on board. The captain sent for Nichol who was taken on shore to a house, shown into an "elegant room where an elegantly dressed person rose and shook hands and said, 'Hoo's a' wi' you.'" They had a long chat, and Nichol learned that his entertainer was a native of Inverness who had been bred to the sea and had been in the contraband along the Spanish Main. He had been taken prisoner and carried to Lima, but being a Roman Catholic, though subjected to a long imprisonment, was not sent to the mines. After his release a rich Spanish woman had fallen in love with and married him. He was now very rich, possessing many horses and servants.

The Governor of Payta was very kind to Nichol and his shipmates. He loved the English, he said, because he had been in the town when Anson sacked it, and he remembered the humanity of the conquerors. Ever since they had kept their church plate in the town house for safety, and Nichol saw them carrying it to the church and back every day.

When the ship arrived at Rio Janeiro Nichol and three others obtained their discharge, and joined a Portuguese vessel bound for Lisbon. The skipper of this vessel had been forty years trading between Lisbon and Rio Janeiro, and because the Portuguese seamen were the worst in the world in cold or rough weather, he had never ventured to make the voyage in the winter. The engagement of the four Englishmen gave him confidence to attempt the pas-

sage. They had plenty of rough and cold weather and what was worse,—

a black fellow of a priest on board to whom the crew paid more attention than to the captain. He was for ever ringing his bell for mass and sprinkling holy water upon the men. We were almost foundered at one time by this unseaman-like conduct. The whole crew ran to the quarter-deck, kneeling down, resigned to their fate, the priest sprinkling holy water most profusely upon them, we four Englishmen were left to steer the vessel and hand the sails. It required two to steer, so that there were only two for the sails.

The consequence was that the ship broached to, and was only saved by cutting away gear and by the high coamings of the hatches which prevented her from filling while she lay on her beam ends. By the exertion of the Englishmen she was righted, when the Portuguese, finding all was well, left their priest and turned to again. But Nichol and his countrymen were worked to death all through the trip, for often when the main tack was half hauled aboard the priest's little bell would ring and away would rush the Portuguese to prayers, leaving the vessel to drift to leeward. When they reached the Tagus the owners presented the Englishmen with a doubloon apiece above their wages in recognition of their good service. The skipper said of them: "If the English were as careful of their souls as they are of their bodies, they would be the best people in the world." The foresail that was set when the ship broached to was given as an offering to the church, as the black priest told them it was through it they were saved. The whole ship's crew carried it through the streets of Lisbon to the church where it was reverently placed upon the altar. Later on the owners bought it back,

as the church had more use for money than for foresails.

Nichol made his way to London, where he shipped on board the NOTTINGHAM bound for China. On the day he entered he witnessed this scene. An old tar was being examined by Captain Rogers as to his seaman-ship and was asked how the main tack was hauled aboard. "I can't tell yer honour, but I can show you." Thereupon he clapped his foot in Captain Rogers's pocket, leaped upon his shoulders and tore his coat to the skirts: "Thus we haul it aboard," said he. Everyone laughed heartily except the victim, who shipped the man after confounding him for his stupidity.

On the voyage, while off the Cape of Good Hope, sailing in company with the East India convoy, Nichol saw a curious example of what men will do to escape from a situation they dislike. A man-of-war had been washing her gratings by towing them astern. Four or five men, under cover of darkness, drew the gratings alongside, slipped down the rope and cut themselves adrift in the vast Atlantic, without an atom of food, a drop of water, or even a stick of wood to guide the frail rafts. As they fell astern they passed close to the NOTTINGHAM, hailed and begged to be taken on board. The captain coldly refused: "I will not," he said; "let some of the slower ships astern pick them up." Nichol saw them drift out of sight and could never hear what became of them. The captain of the man-of-war came alongside the NOTTINGHAM next morning and hailed to know if they had seen his men; to which the skipper of the merchantman gave an indirect answer, as well he might.

Nichol makes some interesting observations on the Chinese, which are not far out even a hundred years



later. He found that they were ingenious enough in copying or improving on another man's ideas, but could not originate. For example, in cooping he found they could not make anything with two ends; they could make a tub but not a barrel. One of the sailors sat to have his portrait painted, and asked not to be made too ugly. "How can make other than is?" was the reply. In loading tea they measured the ship's breadth and depth between the masts. The first one-masted vessel that came to Canton puzzled them. "Hey yaw what fashion? How can measure ship with one mast?" said the Chinese merchants, and it was a long while before this difficulty could be got over.

Nothing more worth mentioning happened on this voyage until Nichol reached the Downs, when a man-of-war's boat boarded the ship, and impressed the whole company, leaving a few old ticket-porters and Greenwich pensioners to take an East Indiaman with a rich cargo of tea up the river; and on June 11th, 1794, Nichol found himself one of the gunner's crew of the EDGAR (seventy-four), Captain Sir Charles Henry Knowles.

The EDGAR went on a cruise in the North Sea and put into Leith Roads in sight of Nichol's home. He asked the captain for leave to visit his friends, which was granted, subject to the first lieutenant's consent. "No, I won't allow you to go ashore," said the lieutenant; "it is not safe to allow a pressed man leave." Though he had been years from home Nichol declares that if he had been given leave he would have honestly returned. While they lay here a mutiny broke out on the DEFIANCE (seventy-four), because the captain had served five instead of three water grog. The weather was bitter, and the spirit thus reduced was, said the

mutineers, thin as muslin and unfit to keep out the cold. The EDGAR was ordered alongside the DEFIANCE to engage her, but the mutineers being principally fishermen and "stout-hearted dogs," Nichol doubted if the former's crew would engage them, believing the others were in the right, and if they had done so they would have blown each other out of the water, for they were equally matched; but fortunately the mutineers returned to duty and this dreadful alternative was avoided. After another cruise in the North Sea, in which the EDGAR narrowly escaped shipwreck in a tempest and had to return to the Humber under jury masts for repairs, the whole ship's company were turned over to the GOLIATH (seventy-four), and sailed to join Sir John Jervis and take part in two famous naval battles.

Here is Nichol's description of the battle off Cape St. Vincent.

We came in sight of the Spanish fleet of twenty-five sail, mostly three deckers, at daybreak. We were only eighteen, but we were English and gave them their valentines in style. Soon as we came in sight a bustle commenced not to be conceived or described. To do it justice, while every man was as busy as he could be the greatest order prevailed. A serious cast was to be perceived on every face, but not a shade of doubt or fear. We rejoiced in a general action; not that we loved fighting, but we all wished to be free to return to our homes and follow our own pursuits. We knew there was no other way of obtaining this than by defeating the enemy. "The hotter war the sooner peace" was a saying with us.

When everything was cleared, the ports open, the matches lighted and guns run out, we gave them three such cheers as are only to be heard in a British man-of-war. This intimidates the enemy more than a broadside, as they have often declared to me. It shows them all is right, and the men in a true spirit, baying to be at them. During the action my situation was not one of danger, but most wounding to my feelings and trying

to my patience. I was stationed in the after magazine serving powder from the screen and could see nothing, but I could feel every shot that struck the *GOLIATH*, and the cries and groans of the wounded were most distressing, as there was only the thickness of the screen blankets between me and them. Busy as I was, the time hung upon me with a dreary weight. Not a soul spoke to me but the master-at-arms, as he went his rounds to inquire if all was safe. No sick person ever longed more for his physician than I for the voice of the master-at-arms. The surgeon's mate at the commencement of the action spoke a little, but his hands were soon too full of his own affairs. Those who were carrying ammunition ran like wild creatures and scarce opened their lips. I would far rather have been on the decks amid the bustle, for there the time flew on eagle's wings. The *GOLIATH* was sore beset; for some time she had two three deckers upon her, but the men stood to their guns as cool as if they had been exercising. The *BRITANNIA* was ordered by the Admiral to our assistance and she, with her forty-twos, soon made them sheer off. Towards the close of the action the men were very weary. One lad put his head out of a port hole, saying, "D— them; are they not going to strike yet?" For us to strike was out of the question.

At length the roar of the guns ceased and I came on deck to see the effects of a great sea engagement, but such a scene of blood and desolation I want words to express. I had been in a good number of actions with single ships, but this was my first in a fleet, and I had only a small share in it. We had destroyed a great number and secured four three-deckers. The fleet was in such a shattered situation that we lay twenty-four hours in sight of them repairing our rigging. It is after the action the disagreeable part commences; the crews are wrought to the utmost of their strength, for days they have no remission of their toil, repairing the rigging and other parts injured in the action; their spirits are broken by fatigue, they have no leisure to talk of the battle and when the usual round of duty reverts, don't choose to talk of a disagreeable subject. Who can speak of what he did when all did their utmost? One of my messmates had the heel of his shoe shot off; the skin was not broke, yet his leg swelled and became black, and he was lame for a long time.

Knowles was made admiral and went home, and Captain Foley took command of the *GOLIATH* which, after refitting at Lisbon, sailed to join in the blockade of Cadiz. Soon after Nelson picked out thirteen seventy-fours from the fleet; the *GOLIATH*, being one of the fastest ships, was one of these, and away the squadron sailed under a press of canvas, the crews having no idea whither they were bound until they came to anchor in the Straits of Messina.

An American man-of-war was lying here and Captain Foley "ordered her captain to unmoor, that the *GOLIATH* might get her station, as it was a good one near the shore." The order was thus answered, "I will let you know I belong to the United States of America and will not give way to any nation under the sun except in a good cause," a very proper answer to what, according to Nichol, was a very cool request. A day or two later the ships were under way again in chase of the French fleet and at last caught them in Aboukir Bay, and Nichol played his small part in the battle of the Nile.

We ran in between the French fleet and the shore, and as soon as they were in sight a signal was made by the Admiral for every vessel as she came up to make the best of her way, firing upon the French ships as she passed, and every man to take his bird, as we jokingly called it. The *GOLIATH* led the van. There was a French frigate right in our way. Captain Foley cried, "Sink that brute, what does he do there?" In a moment she went to the bottom and her crew were seen running into her rigging. The sun was just setting and we went into the bay, and a fiery red sun it was. If I had had my choice I would have been on deck to see what was passing, but my station was in the magazine with the gunner. As the ship entered the bay we stripped to our trowsers, opened our ports, and to every ship we passed we gave a broadside with three cheers.

Below in the magazine all the informa-

tion we got was from the boys and women who carried the powder. The women behaved as well as the men, and got a present for their bravery from the Grand Signior. When the French admiral's ship blew up, the GOLIATH got such a shake we thought the after part of her had blown up too, until the boys told us what it was. They brought us every now and again the cheering news of another French ship having struck, and we answered the cheers on deck with heart-felt joy. In the heat of the action a shot came right into the magazine, but it did no harm as the carpenters quickly plugged the hole. Every now and then the gunner's wife brought her husband and me a drink of wine, and this lessened our fatigue much. Some of the women were wounded; one, belonging to Leith, died of her wounds and was buried upon a small island in the bay. One woman, belonging to Edinburgh, bore a son in the action. When we ceased firing I went on deck to view the state of the fleets, and an awful sight it was. The whole bay was covered with dead bodies, mangled, wounded, and scorched, not a bit of clothes on them except their trowsers. A number of seamen had been picked up from the ORIENT and were cowering under the forecastle. Captain Foley had clothed them from the steward's slops, and had given them something to eat.

Nichol noticed that these men were in quite different spirits from others he had seen taken prisoners during the American war. Then they had laughed and made merry, saying "'Tis the fortune of war;" but the prisoners on the GOLIATH were sullen and downcast as if each had lost a ship of his own.

Here are two incidents of the battle that Nichol witnessed on the GOLIATH. A lad was stationed by a salt-box, on which he sat to issue cartridges from and keep the lid closed in the interval. He was asked for a cartridge, but gave no answer, sitting upright still, with his eyes wide open. One of the men gave him a push and he fell his length on the

deck; there was not a mark on his body, but he was stone dead. Another lad had a match in his hand to fire his gun. In the act of applying it a shot took off his arm, leaving it hanging by a small piece of the skin. The match fell to the deck. The lad looked to his arm and seeing what had happened, seized the match in his left hand, fired his gun, and then went below to have his wound dressed.

After the battle Nichol was kept at blockade work for eight months, and then was transferred to various other ships, serving with the seamen on shore at the siege of Alexandria. He remained afloat until the peace, when he was paid off a ship's corporal and returned to his home. He had been seven years afloat on a man-of-war, and twenty-five years at sea. When he reached Edinburgh he found among other changes "elegant streets where I had left corn growing."

He soon got employment as a cooper, married a wife, and was living happily enough when war broke out again, and the press was so hot that to escape it Nichol was compelled to sell all his possessions and hide himself in an inland village. As the war went on Nichol grew poorer and poorer, for work was less easy to be got away from the seaport. His wife died: he had no children to ease his old age; and when peace came and trade revived Nichol had grown old and was forgotten by his countrymen. A compassionate Edinburgh tradesman, anxious to do something for the old man, took down his story from his lips and persuaded Blackwood to publish it in the hope that his country would do something for him. It is an old story of how much, or rather how little, this country does for its veterans, and it is more than likely that Nichol died in a workhouse.

WALTER JEFFERY.

## KWANNON.

*(The Goddess of Mercy and Motherhood in Japan.)*

MINE are all delicate and tender things,—  
 Soft twilight-coloured moths that cannot bear  
 The day's abashless stare,—  
 The glow-worm shining softly for her mate  
 Who has no lamp, even as she has no wings,—  
 The drones that toward autumn meet their fate,  
 Fallen from their high estate  
 Because the workers and their queen have stings  
 And not one memory of the good days done  
 When the old queen was young, and 'neath the sun  
 Frolicked and loved and wedded those to-day  
 The honey-makers leave their toil to slay.

Mine are the rosy-footed doves that mourn  
 For ever in the tree-tops, night and noon  
 Like lovers left forlorn,  
 Or rose-bough cheated of its rose in June.  
 Mine are the temple-pigeons, light of mood  
 That in the craziest nests  
 Rear up an iris-breasted clamorous brood.  
 Mine are the maple-trees whose scarlet crests  
 Outbloom the red cranes and the redder sun  
 When frosts have just begun.  
 Mine is the field-mouse that a shadow scares  
 Whose nest is slung between two ears of corn,—  
 The flower that folds up if a finger dares  
 Approach her golden petals,—dew at morn,  
 The poppy reapers mow,—  
 All frail and lovely things the stars below.

Shadows and clouds are mine, dewdrops and rain,  
 Dumb creatures that we load with work and pain  
 And pay with swinging lash and angry tongue :  
 Mine are the jests unsaid, the songs unsung :  
 Mine are the groaning gates of death and birth  
 That to and fro reluctantly are swung ;  
 And mine are all the weakest things on earth :  
 Pale buds on the wistaria-branches hung,—  
 The dancing monkey, chained to make you mirth,—  
 The geisha-girl whose painted lips must smile

Although her eyes would gladly weep awhile,—  
The boat, that drowned her crew, drawn high and dry  
Ashore to rot away and slowly die,—  
The scorched land cracking 'neath a brazen sky  
That once held many rice-fields in its girth  
And never dreamed of dearth.

Last, dearest, fairest of all feeble things,  
Mine are all children, borne with pain, to live  
And love and labour, and return again  
Unto the earth whence they arose to flower  
The blossoms of a lifetime, as the plum  
And the imperial chrysanthemum  
In their own season come,  
The blossoms of a day and of an hour.

I make the light soft to the children's eyes  
With veils of rain drawn tenderly across  
The flaming sun that hunts adown the skies  
The stars no man at height of day can see,  
So keen a hunter he.  
After the rain, lest baby eyes should weep  
Because the clouds so close a cover keep  
Before the bright face of the imperious sun,  
I build a rainbow east and west to show  
How laughter follows on the track of tears  
All down the years,  
How beauty shall be builded out of fears,  
Hope out of doubt be spun.  
The rainbow of five colours arched in one  
My symbol is. Its irises I wear  
For garland in my hair;  
And when the children, grown and growing old,  
My face no more behold,  
A rainbow of five colours in the sky  
Tells them that, though all passes, here am I,  
Kwannon the Merciful, with arms that strain  
To clasp my children to my heart again.

## THE GREEN FAKIR.

HOLLAND paused in the twilight, and looked upon his handiwork.

Thirteen hours before, a mango grove, set desolately upon the skirts of the Ganges *karda*,—the coarse-grassed, sandy jungle that bordered the river in cold weather—had wakened to the bubble of camels. With them had come tent-pitchers, coolies, and shouting orderlies; and over all there had been the eye of Charles Holland, superintendent of Indian police. Now the dusk was falling on a lane of tents that spread below the great trees. One end of the avenue was spanned by a gaudy striped marquee, through whose open door chairs, tables, and tiger-skins, frilled cushions, and a travellers' book-case, were invitingly visible. A flag-staff had been raised before it; the halliards were slack, but there was bunting heaped at its foot. A savoury smell of cooking and wood-smoke came from the outskirts of the grove noisy with the voices of *khammahs* and the clash of cooking-pots; and before each tent door, raised upon a perch of wood, a clay saucer carried a floating wick. A servant ran down the line as Holland waited; and presently twenty little primitive lamps smoked and twinkled gaily, with a crowning, festive air, through the darkness of the covering trees.

A pony stumbled about the tussocks outside the grove, and Holland turned to greet its rider as he dismounted. "Ah, Verney," he said; "where are the others?"

"Coming, — pad elephants, two *gharries*, a riding party, and the

Commissioner in a dog-cart. By George, you have worked! It is good enough for the Lieutenant-Governor and all his women-folk."

"Think so!" Holland was gratified. "It took some planning and measuring; I don't think the general effect is bad. You'll find a badminton-court levelled in front of the mess-tent. Here," touching a sunken flower-pot at his foot, "is one hole; there," nodding to the flagstaff, "is another, in case the ladies like some fancy putting. And the *chirags* make a neat illumination."

"They smell rather strong," Verney said, sniffing at an odour of oil and lamp-black with a critical nose. "But look—oh yes, they look fine. Well, if *bundobust* could do it, old man, the camp ought to be a success. There is every attraction on the spot, outside the Fair and the pilgrims altogether."

"Ah!" Holland linked arms, and the two men paced down the grove. "That is just what I wanted. You know Mrs. Champneys is coming? Well, I want to distract her attention, to keep her away from the,—the association of the place. She had to come, you know, because she's governess to the Knowles's children. 'Tisn't for the Commissioner I've planned, or Mrs. Roebuck, or any of the rest; but if Nellie Champneys can be kept from remembering things, I shall be satisfied. She nursed my poor wife: she's a brick; it's horrible to think of what her life has been,—and will be."

"Eh? I don't understand," Verney said, puzzled. "Who is Mrs. Champneys?"



"What! You don't remember about Linstock's murder?"

"Linstock? Linstock? Must have been when I was in Burmah. Stop a bit, though; there's a glimmer—Wasn't Champneys the name of the man who killed him? But I don't really recollect. What was it?"

"I thought you would recall the name, at least," Holland said. "Linstock and Champneys were both in the Public Works, and they came tenting here to Rajghat to survey for Bathurst's scheme of a second dam. They never got on; they had words in the club the night before they started. Champneys was a great soul in some things,—clever, acute, flashes of genius in him—but a mad-tempered, erratic, hot-headed beggar. They had another scene at the river-side, just outside their tent, because Linstock decided for the *bund*, and Champneys against it, and there was a report to be agreed upon. Then Linstock, who was senior, threatened Champneys; and Champneys picked up a table knife, and flung it at him, just as he dropped the curtain of his tent on the last word. Linstock stumbled inside, and when his bearer went in, there he was dead, stuck in the back; he must have died on the spot, without Champneys even discovering that his stroke had told."

"Of course, yes; now I know the story; but not till now that it had happened here. Champneys gave himself up, and then thought better, or worse, of it, and escaped on the way to the central gaol. There was a hue-and-cry for him all over India."

"Yes; that is it. He was never found; he was a dark fellow, and a fine Hindustani scholar; there is no doubt he got away in native dress, and that Mrs. Champneys passed it on to him somehow, when she was allowed to see him at the railway.

The preliminary inquiry was held at Harighur, of course, and he was committed for the sessions; the evidence and his own attitude were dead against him. We knew him well; I had something more than a liking for the man; he was a lovable soul. His wife stayed with us for months afterwards, all through Bessie's illness; poor woman, she was like a wounded hare, and yet she clung to a desperate hope that he was somehow, by some miracle, not guilty after all. She holds it still, though it is four years since it happened, and three since I have seen her. For Champneys's sake, and Bessie's, and her own, I want to make the camp lively, and to keep her away from the river and the scene of the murder, which is just above where the pilgrims are now gathered for the Fair. We have to pass it to get into the bazaar. Linstock's relatives in England marked the spot with a stone cross, the fools! It would have been kinder to have let it be forgotten—look, there is the first *gharry*."

They hurried up the track between the little lamps to where, in the last gleams of daylight, a carriage was swaying over the sand hummocks and the grass. It rolled and dipped like a ship in the trough of the sea, and the men heard a runner shouting as he threaded the way, in and out and roundabout, before the horses. Dark moving blurs began to appear against the darkening background, and the trumpeting of an elephant squealed through the still, warm air of the evening.

"Did Champneys die?" Verney asked, as they bustled out.

"No one knows; he only vanished," Holland answered, closing the conversation with his salutation to the visitors. And Verney, when Roebuck the Commissioner, and the

Commissioner's wife and daughter, and Sherrold the Collector and his pretty nieces with their following subalterns, and Dr. Knowles and the lesser lights had been attended to, saw him walking beside a little thin woman with children at her skirts, and knew that he had found Mrs. Champneys, and placed his services at her disposal.

## II.

The Commissioner beckoned when the ladies left the dinner table for the camp fire outside the marquee, and Holland obediently gathered up his wine-glass and his napkin, and shifted into Mrs. Sherrold's vacant place of honour. Roebuck took coffee, and looked approvingly at the policeman. "I congratulate you," he said. "The desert blossoms like the rose. The ladies are charmed."

"Then I am rewarded, sir," Holland answered. "I should like to know why, of all the hundreds of miles of Ganges country, forty thousand pilgrims should choose this desolate spot from which to bathe and pray at some especial moon."

"My dear sir, where would you find a more favourable place for the erection of a ten days' mushroom city? They have sufficient river frontage for the forty thousand to take their simultaneous dip at Thursday's moonset; and their choice of the sandy *karda* simplifies the question of sanitation. Don't quarrel with the dead devotees who inaugurated the Rajghat Fair. I wanted to ask you how the place is filling."

"The booths are all up, and the merchants and the mendicants are in full cry," answered Holland. "The pony market is poor this year, but the flocks and herds will change hands briskly. There is no crime as yet. Thirty-two thousand pilgrims have

come, so far; we expect six thousand more by the bathing day. The only thing likely to cause a hitch is that the old fakir has a rival."

"There must be many fakirs."

"Oh yes, sir," Holland said. "But the Yellow Fakir,—our original, shouting, irrepressible fanatic—has a Green enemy encamped upon his own favourite location, between the wrestling enclosure and the coppersmiths' shops, and he doesn't like it. The Green *wallah* has an enthusiastic audience; he is grabbing our Yellow friend's disciples and their *pice*. They are both filthy, unkempt, unsavoury brutes; I wish we could clear them out altogether."

"H'm," the Commissioner said. "Our place is to safeguard the customs of India, not to disturb them, Mr. Holland. What has Mr. Sherrold decided to do?"

"He has doubled the police patrol, and he has had the booths scattered more widely than usual," was the answer. "If there is trouble, the augmentation of my men, and the decentralisation of the Fair ought to make a collision easy to settle."

"Just so, very wise. And where has the Yellow Fakir anchored himself?"

"That is the difficulty, sir. He is on the loose. We hope, however, that when he finds the stream of traffic has been diverted, he will betake himself to the camels, or the water-carriers' station, or some other likely corner at which to catch the pilgrims' eye. At present he hovers over his old nook like a bird above a robbed nest. He hasn't the courage to do more at present than gibe at the new light, who is a young fellow with a hideous concretion of ashes and piety upon him; but he does not take kindly to the usurpation, and you know, sir, religious maniacs have a power—"

"I must go down to the Fair with Mr. Sherrold early to-morrow," Roebuck said, nodding, and brushing his shirt-front. "Yes; they have a power, Mr. Holland; but so have we. And now, shall we join the ladies?"

Scarlet-clad servants rolled up the wall of the tent, and disposed of the temporary division of the company. The women were gathered in a semi-circle of rug-strewn chairs, and they faced a camp fire which was being replenished by half-seen, flitting figures. Holland's lamps had burned themselves out for the time, and behind the leaping flames and the smoke the tents glimmered vague and ghostly, walled by the rampart of trees, and watched through a lacework of branches by the myriad blazing stars of the Indian night.

Mrs. Champneys sat a little apart, on the outer edge of the ring, her hands folded on her lap, her eyes, set deep in a worn face, gazing into the fire. She was a slight, brown-haired woman, unobtrusive, black-robed, but scarcely insignificant even in her isolation. Holland drew a chair through the tent with him, and sat down at her side. She turned her head, and met him with a smile. "Who put the flowers in my tent?" she said. "Who conjured up an *ayah* from the depths of the jungle? You are a very kind friend to me, Charles."

"It is such luck to see you again," Holland answered. "I do hope you will have a pleasant time here. If you want to play badminton, or golf, or ride, or fish, or need anything that it is in my power to give you, let me know, and be sure my pleasure will be in arranging for you. How do you like the Knowles?"

"They are good, busy people," she said evasively.

He looked across the circle at Mrs. Knowles's fat stolidity, at the doctor's impassive jowl, with a sinking heart.

They were not the employers for a sensitive woman. What had she not suffered in the intervening years? And she still believed in, and hoped for Champneys.

"The children are not clever, but they are good little things," Mrs. Champneys was saying. "There! Now I have a favour to ask you. They are very eager to see the Fair. Can you arrange for us to go down to-morrow morning?"

"Why should you go? I can take them myself. They shall have two elephants, and I will see that they are shown everything and brought back before the sun is hot. You shall remain in bed and rest."

"They would lose half the pleasure if I were not with them. Freddy and I are very anxious to inspect the ponies together, and there is a parrot to be chosen for Eileen, and a set of glass bangles for Hilda. They depend on me. Oh, yes, yes, I must certainly go," she said. Then she went on, looking suddenly up at him: "Dear friend, are you afraid I shall suffer? Not more than usual, I assure you. Poor Mr. Linstock! But remember, I believe—I know—that Ernest's was not the hand that killed him. My poor boy might have been a murderer, but he was not; I repeat to you that he was not. He is innocent indeed, though his mad rage brought him very near to destruction. Ah, he repented so bitterly, Charles! And now he is a wanderer somewhere, cut off from me, lost to me, though I begged him to let us communicate if we could."

Holland stared at the fire. He had nothing to say; he could not share in her delusion. There was no hope of Champneys's restitution to the world he had once walked in as a man amongst men; if he were still alive, it was with the blood of his colleague on his hands, and he must

go on skulking, hidden from his wife and friends, until his day was done.

"I am not afraid that he is dead," the quiet voice went on. "He will come back to me when the mystery of Mr. Linstock's death is solved; perhaps it is that he is waiting until he can clear himself. He knows that I trust in him, and wait for him; but it is a long time, and the suspense and the longing are very cruel." She looked up through the trees at the deep sky, and smiled faintly. "The stars that shine on me shine on him," she said. "I think that he is near me sometimes; I think it now. It must be the sight of you again, and the recalling, by your voice, of so many dear, happy memories. I wish you thought that I am right, but I shall convince you some day, Charles. And then we,—Ernest and I—shall not forget your many kindnesses, and all your friendship."

She rose; Mrs. Roebuck was saying good-night. Mrs. Champneys held out her hand, and did not seem to notice that Holland's eyes were misty. "Good-night," she said. "Send a *salaam* to my tent when the elephants are ready."

### III.

The shouts of the Knowles's children dinned in Holland's ears while he dressed next morning, and he knew before he came out of his tent that they and Mrs. Champneys were not to be balked of their expedition. After all, he found that he had exaggerated the painfulness of it in his over-night mood. The elephants swung out of the camp into the crisp air, their shadows very long before them, with the chatter of their young freight checking the sad memories stirred by the scene of Linstock's death. The children's laughter filled

up the time it took to cover the long four miles between the camp and the Fair, and when the party neared the bathing-place, there was so much to catch the eye in the tented city that Holland was able to hope Mrs. Champneys had scarcely seen the cross among the tussocks, near as they had been obliged to pass by it.

They plunged into the bazaar, and were soon drifting with the stream of humanity that surged past the booths, dazzling in its silver bangles and many-coloured tinselled finery, as far as the eye could see. There were the tones of thirty thousand babbling voices, the cries of sweetmeat vendors and cloth and brassware merchants, the laughter of men and women making holiday, and occasionally the drone and the minor chords of some native musicians, or the peremptory thud of a snake-charmer's drum. A spray of human beings tossed upon the edge of the river, bathing, drinking, sousing naked brown babies, filling, in a thousand picturesque attitudes under a brilliant sun, their *lotahs* or their water-pots. Here was a forest of bullock *gharries* gay with crimson trappings; there a sea of *ekkas*, (pony carts) more fantastic in shape and equally gaudy. A lute twanged inside the mustard-coloured screen that hid a company of mummers; the outskirts of the Fair were busy with the unlading of camels, and the scuffle of little mouse-coloured ponies, tripping in with bundles on their backs. The children, who were able from their perch to take in the whole flat landscape at a glance, feasted their eyes and chattered to each other.

Holland leaned forward from the tail seat, the place of sacrifice, on his pad, and pointed out objects of interest to Mrs. Champneys over her shoulder. "Pig and wild-fowl were

the population here a month ago," he said. "They will be able to return to their homes three weeks hence. But now—" He swept his arm out, including the whole ant-like swarm of Hindus in his gesture.

"It is religious custom that has brought the people here, I suppose?" said Mrs. Champneys.

"They bathe in the river, yes, and incidentally do some trafficking and merry-making," Holland answered. "They will dip ceremoniously at moonset on Thursday, and the mothers of sick children, the men with enemies who stalk abroad, the childless wives, the blind, will hope and pray, no doubt, for their hearts' desires. It is a peaceable, self-contained crowd, taking it all round; the disagreeable element lies in a few jealous fakirs, who breed strife and street-riots when they get the chance."

He plunged into the story of the Green and Yellow rivals, painting the battle for the cherished position with a humorous touch, yet reflecting a little gravely as he laughed that the Yellow Fakir's anger had had an ominously unrestrained frenzy in it. Such men had been smitten mad with rage before now, and had run *amok* like rabid dogs; if a man ran *amok* in that unarmed, congested throng, there would be panic, and trouble not easily stamped out by the heel of the law.

The elephants lurched round a corner. The hum of the crowd they encountered beyond it was a semitone lower than the one through which they had rolled. Holland's trained ears noted the difference, and he leaned still further forward. "Stop, *mahout*!" he said.

There were a thousand backs turned to them, a thousand heads shifting below them. Before the human barrier the sun poured upon

an open patch with a ragged wall of canvas propped on poles behind it, and a coppersmith's wares flashing and blazing beyond. A figure, cross-legged like Buddha, and like the god passionless and imperturbable, squatted upon the sand in the multitude's view. Another ash-smeared figure rocked and capered towards it. Shrill spurts of vituperation came from the dancing man, and penetrated the comments and the murmurs of the spectators.

"Ha!" Holland said. "The brutes are at it again. The Yellow Fakir has come back to face his rival. But it won't do. Excuse me a minute, Mrs. Champneys; I must stop this—Where on earth is the inspector? And not a constable in sight, of course!"

He slipped nimbly down the tail of the elephant, and scattered the crowd with his onslaught from the rear. A lane opened before him; Mrs. Champneys saw his sun-hat beat through the *puggarees* and saw them close up again after he had passed. She sat still, explaining the excitement to the children, and waited his return.

Holland pierced the mass, and came upon the scene of action. The Yellow Fakir could see nothing but the cross-legged enemy with the silent sneer; he was edging near and nearer to him, like a cock challenging to battle, and his shrill voice screamed and cracked with his exasperation.

"Thou,—who wast a babe unborn when I was already a holy man—*thou*, base one, to set thyself up against me, thy holiness to mine! Thou, to plant thy vile bones in the place I have made sacred, to parade thy sanctity in the face of mine! Where is thy record? What hast thou done that pious men should give honour to thee? Hast fasted as I, walked upon thy knees through the length of Hindu-

stan, hast kept thy lips from aught but water and a little meal, as I!"

"Even so," said the level measured voice, and the sneer remained. "These be but poor things; even this unworthy one hath accomplished them, oh man of gray hairs! Show these assembled brethren better deeds than mine for the faith, and truly they will arise and cast me out. Come!"

Holland's heart gave a great bound, and the hand that he was upraising remained in the air. He knew the voice; good God! It was impossible to mistake it. He looked, sharply and nearly, at the Green Fakir from behind his rival's back, and he found himself fixed by the eyes of Champneys, undisguised as the tones of his voice, and set in the face of an unrecognisable and naked fanatic. The eyes looked intelligently upon him; there was a flash of appeal in them, deep calling to deep. Yet the Buddha-like sneer sat undisturbed on a brown face smeared with ashes.

The thought that this was Linstock's murderer come to justice did not sting him; but the suddenness of the thing did, for Holland had had the remembrance of an English gentleman brought back to him, and the creature upon whom he looked was fantastically horrible. And close upon the heels of the unexpected mystery was flung the knowledge that Mrs. Champneys was not a hundred yards away, and that she too might see, and show them all what she saw.

Some one had plucked at the Yellow Fakir, and stemmed his torrent by revealing the man in authority. There was a jingle, a clatter, and the inspector and his constables broke through the crowd, chased it, bullied it, and split it into receding units. The Green Fakir gazed upon the tumult with the calm of a disinterested spectator, and tossed a

swift, scornful word to his retreating foe. "Show me a better deed for the faith, oh holy man!"

Holland took half a dozen hurried strides towards him, full only of a desire to hide the truth from the wife, and at the same time to put this gross dishonour to the Champneys he had known out of the eyes of the sun and the gaping world.

"Give me to-day,—I only ask a day," said Champneys's voice through closed lips, in English. "'Fore God, Holland, I shall be a clean man to-morrow! But for Heaven's sake, you, who were my friend, put reliable witnesses into my crowd! That yellow devil shall talk yet."

Holland fell back. The eyes had dropped; there was nothing to be seen but a loathly fakir, nothing to be heard but the patter of his meditations. He realised as he stared that not even a wife could pierce the depths of that disguise. And then, still mazed, still uncertain of what his action should be, he drifted slowly back to the elephants, and found his discovery hustled back to some other thinking time by the voices of Mrs. Champneys and the children. He climbed into the pad, and the little party was rolled away to the further ends of the Fair.

#### IV.

"But Champneys killed Linstock!" Verney said. "You said there was no doubt, that there could be none. Would he come back, risking so much, and appeal to you after four years?"

He was sitting upon Holland's bed, with the shadows thick about the narrow corners of the tent. And Holland, who had beaten his brains all day against a mystery, now unburdened himself and poured forth his perplexities.



"I did think so, but if there could be a loophole . . . No, it is impossible. Yet, Verney, there is method in this pitting himself against the Yellow Fakir; and I can see it."

"Where?"

"The Yellow Fakir knows something, and Champneys is stirring him to a pitch of rage in which he may be shaken beyond caution, and spit it out. This Green Fakir has dogged the Yellow one for months past, they tell me now; he has rivalled him and baited him incessantly, and always—mark that!—with the never-varying challenge to produce some proof of greater labour for the faith than he has shown."

"Well?"

"The old man has hinted at things; and there have been jeers, and he has lost ground because he went no further than hinting. The crowning insult of occupying his place is part of the scheme. What does it all mean? And what have the last four years been to Champneys? *That* creature—that naked savage! . . . Where did he learn the tricks of the beast so minutely? Through what depths has his 'prenticeship not dragged him? He was a passionate-tempered man,—poor erring soul—but he was English, and wholesome, and he was Nellie Champneys's husband. The fakir is a horror to dwell upon. Ugh!" Holland swung about and gripped the tent pole defiantly. "He killed Linstock; how could it be otherwise? But he was my friend, Verney, and he has asked me for this day. He has it. There are some of my men among the lookers-on too, as he wished. If the Yellow Fakir boils up again, and commits an indiscretion, they are there to note it. I give him his day. Afterwards,—I don't know,—my duty—" He made a gesture of despair.

"Cheer up!" Verney said, and

sprang to his feet. "Let us get out of this. It is abominably puzzling, and I can see light no more clearly than you. But a man would not descend to a vile disguise,—ay, and as you say, the 'prenticeship which his perfection in it implies—without some cogent reason. It is not the madness of desperation, for every move is planned. I believe, 'pon my word, that I hold with Mrs. Champneys. And now let us get into the fresh air. This tent is about as full of 'bacey smoke as it can be. I have smoked three pipes since you called me in."

They passed into the grove; but they turned instinctively from where the lane of tents led to the awning, and slipped instead into the far unoccupied dusk of the trees. They were still very busy with their thoughts.

"The inspector was to report to me at sundown. It is past, and he does not come," Holland said presently. "He had explicit instructions enough. His spies were to be picked, and they were to hover and to dodge, and to listen, but there was to be no interference unless there was imminent danger of bloodshed. That is a modification of yesterday's orders, and of Roebuck's wishes; but, you see, Champneys asked for his chance, and he must have it."

"Just so," Verney said. "What is that?"

He pointed his finger towards the plain beyond the grove and the sandhills, gray and gaunt in the half-light, that swept in waves across it. There was a monkey-like thing running, and stumbling in its haste, over the tussocks towards them. It fell, and rose again; it tossed its arms into the air with gestures of eager haste; and then it shouted, and grew upon the instant into the Green Fakir.

The two men sprang forward simultaneously as the fact dawned upon

them. The fakir lurched to their feet, and Holland dragged him up and searched hungrily for the eyes of Champneys. He found them, and with them more, in face and feature, of the man he knew. The Buddha-mask was gone; this was a white man in a brown skin, grotesquely, poorly disguised by hideous stains and daubings, a man who suffered from the humiliation of his nakedness, and who gasped English to them as he regained his breath.

"No one has seen me but you two, eh? Holland, I trust you,—tell this other fellow—where is your tent? I slipped out of the crowd and I ran—I ran—your tent, man!"

"Here," Holland said, and he pushed him into it. Verney loosed the curtain and struck a match. Its flame, leaping up, showed a face working with the pent-up emotion of four years, and he turned away and busied himself with the lamp.

Holland filled a basin, and dropped soap and a towel beside it. "You want these?" he said quietly.

"Yea," Champneys said; "I can use 'em now. Four years in hell,—I am going to come back to blessed civilisation. Where is Nellie? I know she is here, for I have seen her. Oh, if you knew how hard it has been to keep away from her and let her suffer!" He plunged his face into the water, and began to scrub furiously at the ashes that defiled it.

"But we don't understand as yet," Holland hinted, after a pause filled up by sluicings and the slap of a sponge.

"The inspector will tell you in a few minutes. I slipped away as he left the bazaar," Champneys said. "The Yellow Fakir has confessed; I forced it out of him. It was his hand that struck down Linstock, and at last,—after this eternity—he has boasted of it openly, given chapter

and verse, raved of what he did. You served me well, Holland; there were three of your men within hearing, and when he had come to the end they stepped out and took him into custody. Of course he will stick to it now, for he has claimed the murder as a sign of his zeal for the preservation of Ganga against the pollution of the infidel."

Slowly the brown dye gave way before the vigorous ablutions, and in its place came mottled red and tan, the skin of a sun-baked Anglo-Indian.

"Try vaseline," Verney said. Holland fell to digging a shirt and a suit of clothes out of his camel-trunk. It was their way of expressing belief and sympathy; neither could have found words in which to frame the sentiment of the moment.

"God knows, it might as well have been I," Champneys went on. "He in His mercy saved me from a fearful crime. I thought at first that I had done it, though I flung the knife wildly and without intent to strike; and I was ready enough to die for it, then. But I *knew* that it went groundwards: I threw it down, and I heard it quiver in the earth. It could not have struck between his shoulders. And then my *sayce*, a poor wretch in trembling fear of the Yellow Fakir, contrived to get access to me, and hint to me of the real truth. He would not have borne witness against the brute, but he had some conscience in him, and when I was free I tracked him down, and wrung out the whole story. The Yellow Fakir had been hanging about the camp all day, full of rage at the tales that had been spread of our mission. We were to tamper with the river, insult it, make it a putrid abomination,—you can fill the lies in for yourself. He saw the knife lying in the doorway of the tent, and Linstock sitting at the table with his back turned to the entrance;

and he stabbed him. He has said it in the face of a hundred people, and perhaps poor Buldoo, who witnessed the murder, will have the courage now to come forward and substantiate the matter in court; I can lay my finger on him in half a day. But at least my task is done, and, oh Holland, I have been deadly heart-sick and weary in the doing of it!"

He paused in his dressing and found his hand in the policeman's grip. Holland spoke huskily as he closed his palm over the man's fingers.

"Thank God it is done, Champneys! I cannot say how glad I am; I haven't the words; I am a dumb, stupid beast, and your freedom is far more to me than I can express. But there is Nellie, she will be able to show you,—we won't keep you from her another moment—only let us go and break the news, and send her in."

And as he and Verney stepped again outside, they saw the inspector looming through the darkness, with Linstock's murderer led beside him.

MAYNE LINDSAY.

## TRUSTS AND COMBINATIONS.

Is unlimited competition about to become a thing of the past? Are we entering upon a new era in the history of industry? In the light of passing events thoughtful citizens may well ask themselves these questions, and a few facts culled from recent industrial history may help them to find replies. Most students of industrial problems have looked with a light heart upon the possibility of permanent combinations of capitalists. They have had unlimited confidence in the desire of the average trader to make more money than his rivals, and they have felt very sure that any attempt at combination for a common cause would end in failure, through individual capitalists falling out of the ranks in the hope of circumventing their fellows. There is much evidence, even in the history of Trusts and the latest combinations of capital, to justify this faith; but, on the other hand, there is much to warrant the contrary belief, that unrestricted competition is being subjected to, and will continue to be further subjected to very serious modifying influences.

The great changes that have taken place in industrial methods during the past twenty years have tended to make the wild-cat system of competition, so dearly beloved by certain economists, no longer the cheerful and invigorating evolutionary influence that it was. When industries were carried on with a comparatively small amount of capital and plant the fierce struggle for pre-eminence only resulted in a few thousand small capitalists going to the wall every year, and a few thousand creditors losing their

money. The disasters being on a small scale, and each one affecting only a limited circle, the world was thought to be going very well. But the days of small concerns, notwithstanding all Prince Kropotkin's delightful theories, are over. Small workshops have developed into large workshops, large workshops into factories, and factories into manufacturing colonies, because one hundred tons of steel a day can be produced more cheaply per ton than can ten tons a day. A twenty thousand-ton steamer carries a ton of freight at less cost than that at which the small steamers used to carry a pound. When industry is conducted on a large scale the risk of failure through over-competition involves such terrific losses that it is not surprising that some practical methods are being sought to reduce competition to within at least reasonable limits. The example of Trades Unionism has not been lost upon the capitalist. So long as workmen competed with each other to sell their labour at the lowest price they remained the Calibans of the community; not until they ceased to compete and combined to obtain a certain standard of wages, or profit on their labour, did they improve their position.

So far back as 1890 the Foreign Office issued a valuable report on *THE CONSTITUTION, ATTRIBUTES AND LEGAL STATUS OF TRUSTS IN THE UNITED STATES*, in which the word *Trust*, as now used in connection with great capitalist combinations, was thus defined:

An organisation made possible by a surrender on the part of the stockholders

of the different corporations entering into the Trust of their separate shares of stock to a board of trustees, the trustees holding from the individual stockholders an irrevocable power of attorney. In return the trustees issue trust certificates which represent an equitable share in the combined properties. The business of all the corporations is then managed in unison by the trustees, and the profits of all being pooled are distributed among the certificate holders in proportion to their holdings.

The most notorious example of the Trust in the United States, the Standard Oil Trust, which is held up by its opponents as a most iniquitous monopoly, saved the oil industry from utter ruin. It found a large number of refineries working with antiquated machinery and unscientific methods, turning out badly-refined oil, unable to improve their methods because all their energies were devoted to trying to undersell one another. The Trust amalgamated about eighty per cent. of these firms, with the result that the insane competition ceased, improved scientific methods and machinery were introduced, a better and safer product is being sold to consumers at a decreased price, a quarter of a million workmen are employed and receive good wages, and strikes are unknown. This particular Trust has certainly not destroyed competition, because the amount of oil refined at the present time by competitors of the Trust is larger than the total quantity refined at the time the Trust was formed. The charges brought against this Trust are that, by using its enormous power to make secret compacts with railway managers for obtaining special rates, and even blocking the means of transport against its competitors, it has checked healthy competition, and that, although oil is cheaper, it would have been cheaper still had the Standard Oil Trust never come into existence.

In the United States over a hun-

dred articles, from steel rails to coffins, are in the hands of Trusts; but there is no evidence of any of those combinations having been successful in creating a monopoly. In every case where Trusts have endeavoured to create a monopoly and to raise prices above reasonable competitive rates, the attempt seems to have ended in disaster. The Sugar Trust at one time almost obtained a monopoly, but its attempt to inflate prices resulted in powerful rivals coming into the field, and prices were lowered. Many attempts to create Trusts in the United States have ended in disastrous failure; the Salt Trust, for example, the Copper Trust, and the Barbed Wire Trust.

Although the word Trust has been little used in connection with English commerce, the combination of capitalists with a view to modifying competition is as old at least as the early years of the great railway companies. The railway mania had not existed many years before it was clearly seen that fierce competition meant financial disaster, and the myriad small companies became merged in the principal trunk lines. The London and North-Western has swallowed up forty-five companies in its time, and quite recently the Legislature has been so unwise as to allow two Southern lines to amalgamate, and thus create a complete monopoly of the means of transit in the south-eastern corner of England.

Combination and amalgamation have been going on persistently in the transport trade for many years past, until competition has been reduced to a minimum so low as to be a menace to the public welfare. In Sir George Findlay's book on *THE WORKING AND MANAGEMENT OF AN ENGLISH RAILWAY* will be found a plain unvarnished statement of the methods adopted by the rail-

way companies to suppress competition. The English and Scotch Traffic Rates Conference and the Normanton Conference settle the rates for the whole of England and Scotland. The result is not always satisfactory to the public, but if competition had not been tempered by such means, it is questionable whether the railway companies would ever have made sufficient profit to enable them to improve their rolling-stock to the extent which they have done.

The cross-channel rates between England and Ireland are controlled by the English and Irish Traffic Rates Conference. Similar conferences exist in the ocean traffic trade. Where there are no conferences there are agreements, secret or open, between rival shipping companies, even in some cases including companies of various nationalities. Within recent years there has been the amalgamation of Leyland and Co. of Hull, Wilson and Son of Hull, Furness and Co. of Hartlepool, and the West Indian and Pacific Steamship Company. There has been an amalgamation of the East and West India Docks and the London and St. Katharine's Docks, and the amalgamation of Elder, Dempster and Co. with the British and African Steam Navigation Co. In February, 1900, the famous Union and Castle Lines gave up competition in favour of union.

In our principal manufacturing industries there has been a steady tendency during the past twenty years for large firms to swallow up numbers of small firms with a view to checking competition and to creating possibilities in improved methods of manufacture. The full advantages of modern science as applied to industry can only be secured when industry is conducted on a gigantic scale. Twelve small firms cannot each

afford to employ a chemist, an inventor, a highly trained expert in each department, and the most costly labour-saving machinery; but when the twelve firms have combined all these things are possible. There is economy in management and supervision. The waste products, which in the case of small individual firms are not worth dealing with, when produced on a large scale are made a source of considerable profit. The great combination can secure economical means of transport which are not possible in the case of the small manufacturer.

The evidence of these facts being recognised and acted upon is enormous. In the textile industry there is the case of J. and P. Coats Limited. In 1890 it was floated as a public company with a capital of over five millions. It has since absorbed sixteen other sewing-thread companies, it has sixty branch houses and one hundred and fifty depots, a gigantic business in the United States, and factories in Russia and Montreal. The English Sewing-Cotton Company has swallowed up all the remaining sewing-cotton manufacturers, one French firm, the principal Scotch firm, and has also a powerful interest in the American Thread Trust. Although these three firms almost control the sewing-cotton industry of the world, they have their difficulties. At the present time the shareholders of the English Sewing-Cotton Company are complaining loudly of mismanagement, and declaring that their foreign trade is too much under the thumb of Messrs. Coats.

In 1898 thirty-one firms of cotton-spinners united to form the Fine-cotton Spinners' Association, with a capital of six millions; fifteen other firms have joined them since, and the extent of their dealings may be gathered from the fact that they have



recently purchased a coal-mine in order to save the profits of the coal-owners. In 1898 the Bradford Dyers' Association was floated with a capital of four millions. It acquired twenty-two businesses comprising ninety per cent. of the Bradford dyeing trade; forty-six other firms in Lancashire and Scotland have since joined the association. Similar instances are to be found in the wool and worsted trades. In 1899 forty-seven firms of calico printers and thirteen firms of merchants combined to form the Calico-printers' Association. This concern now comprises eighty-five per cent. of the calico-printing industry in Great Britain; and although in 1901 its balance-sheet showed a loss of over £106,000, it has during the past six months made a net profit of £157,568, after deducting £99,612 for depreciation, maintenance, etc., and £64,000 for interest on debenture stock. This Association is a striking example of the economies that may be effected by combination. It has closed several establishments that were really unremunerative, and transferred the plant to others where it can be worked profitably, thus making the whole capital more productive.

These are but a few specific instances of what is taking place not in a few industries only, but in almost all of the great industries. Those who are sceptical would do well to consult the valuable contribution of Mr. H. W. Macrosty to this subject, *TRUSTS AND THE STATE*. The fact is brought prominently before the average citizen, who finds his domestic wants being supplied, not by ordinary shopkeepers and small tradesmen, but by shop managers who are the salaried agents of great provision merchants, tobacco manufacturers, and brewers.

Attempts to form Combinations, Trusts, and Pools, with the object of checking competition or creating a

monopoly are not always successful. Notorious instances of failure in this country were the Salt Union and the United Alkali Company. The latter company was a combination of sixty-four firms formed in 1888. It tried to create a monopoly, but by raising prices too high and aiming at a dividend of twenty per cent. it came to disaster.

The Socialists' view of this new order of things is exceedingly interesting, seeing in it, as they do, the coming realisation of their ideal. They say that unrestricted competition brings about such evils, that capitalists are certain to become so weary of the task of cutting each others' throats that gradually industry after industry will be absorbed in huge combinations. The inevitable result will be the creation of monopolies which will be used to secure enormous profits for the capitalists at the expense of the consumers, and especially the working class. Private capital will thus become such an unbearable tyranny that all classes, in self-defence, will agree to the absorption by the State of monopoly after monopoly until eventually all the means of production and distribution will become the property of the nation. They point to the signs of the times,—how telephone, tramway, water, gas, railway, and electric lighting companies have begun by fiercely competing with each other; they have then advanced to the stage of agreement as to prices, or even to combination; finally they have become to all intents and purposes monopolies, making the public convenience subservient to their desire to create dividends, until at last the public, in sheer self-defence, has been forced to consent to such services being transferred from the hands of private capitalists to the management of the State or the Municipality. Socialists

say that the day will come when the Harrods and Liptons of the future will have created a monopoly in food, just as the water companies have created a monopoly in water, and we shall be forced to beg our Legislature to take over the food supply just as we have been forced to beg our Municipalities to take over the water supply.

The power of capitalists to create monopolies has not yet been sufficiently proved to warrant our placing implicit faith in such a forecast of the future as that set forth by the disciples of Karl Marx. Free Trade is a fairly good assurance against monopolies, if not a complete assurance. It is much more likely that the immorality of the commercial world will lead to many frantic but futile efforts to create combinations and monopolies, resulting in such a serious disorganisation of the industrial world as will lead to intense suffering among the working and even the middle classes. It is idle to attempt to forecast the future; the problems of the present are sufficient for all our energies. What we have to face is the painful fact that the sense of personal responsibility between employer and employed is being gradually destroyed, and the divorce between ownership

and authority fast becoming absolute. There may be no flagrant instances of great capitalist combinations acting tyrannously or unjustly to those in their employ; yet no one can help feeling what a dangerous menace, especially in periods of trade depression, such combinations are to the proletariat. Even in normal times the Trust or the great Combination is sure to be organised on inflexible lines. There must be rules to be observed with unswerving rigidity; no personal equations can be taken into account. Petty injustices have to be suffered; there is no sympathetic human tribunal of appeal. The manager throws the responsibility upon his directors, while each individual director pleads that he is but one among many. The chairmen are angels of light, philanthropists bubbling over with the milk of human kindness, but powerless before the votes of shareholders and the advice of managers. The world smiles or sneers at those who suggest that the only real solution of the problems of modern industrial life lies in the gradual moralisation of capital and labour. We are face to face with one of the results of ignoring such a doctrine.

F. W. BOCKETT.

## THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. MAGNUS.

You would hardly expect to find an ancient cathedral up in those Orkney islands that one usually sees huddled away in a spare corner of the map and made to look even smaller than they are by the exigencies of space. Drawn to half scale they seem like the fragments of a bursting shell scattered about an ocean which not so very many degrees higher becomes the empty Arctic. It is curious to think of: once, long ago, strange ships with monstrous figure-heads and painted sides, full of the Northern actors of history, crawled with their lines of oars into the sounds and bays of these islands, till for centuries they became the stage for dramatic events and stirring personages. Some of the players bore names that any history-book tells of. Harald Hardrada, old King; Haco, Bothwell, and Montrose have all played their parts. And there are others, earls, and prelates, and Northern kings, and old sea-rovers, who were really far better worth knowing than half the puppets with more familiar labels. Then, gradually, the lights went out and the audience turned away to look at other things, and the Orkneymen were left to observe the Sabbath and elect a County Council. One by one the old buildings toppled down and the old names changed and the old customs faded, till the place of the islands in history became their place upon the map; but time and man have spared one thing,—this old cathedral church of St. Magnus in Kirkwall.

On the ancient houses of the little

borough and the winding slit of a street the old red church still looks down benignly, and sometimes (of a Sunday I think especially) a little humorously. Over the grey roofs and the tree-tops in sheltered gardens and the black mites of people passing on their business, its lustreless Gothic eyes see a wide expanse of land and a wider and brighter sweep of sea. The winding sounds and broadening bays join and divide and join again, through and through its island dominions. Backwards and forwards, twice a day, the flood tide pours from the open Atlantic, and each channel becomes an eastward flowing river, and then from the North Sea the ebb sets the races running to the west. Everywhere is the sight or the sound of the sea; rollers on the western cliffs, salt currents among the islands, quiet bays lapping the feet of heathery hills. Out of the two great oceans the wind blows like the blasts of an enormous bellows, and on the horizon the clouds are eternally gathering.

It is over this land of moor and water and vapour that the cathedral watches the people; and though from the difficulty of passing through so narrow a street it has never moved from the spot where it first arose, and never seen, one would suppose, the greater part of its territories, yet it knows,—none better—the stories and the spirit of all the islands. Crows and gulls cruise round the tower familiarly and perhaps bring gossip, but eyes so long and narrow, and of so inhuman an anatomy, may very likely see through a hill or a heart for themselves.

The country is like a fleet at sea, and the old spirit of the people came from the deep. At first it was only restless and fierce and free; in time it began to think and at odd moments to be troubled, and they called it pious. Then it looked for a fitting house where it might live when it could no longer find a home in the people. So it built the red cathedral, and there it silently dwells to-day.

There is something in their church none of the respectable townfolk have the slightest suspicion of, something alive that vibrates to the cry of the wind and the breaking of the sea and the little human events that happen in the crow-stepped houses.

On the wild autumn afternoons when the hard north-east wind is driving rain and sleet through the town, the old church begins to remember. The wind and the sleet coming over the sea stir the quick spirit so sharply that every angle is full of sighing noises. As the shortened day draws to an end, and lights begin to twinkle in the town, and the showers become less frequent, and the clouds are rolled up and gathered off the sky, then the people come out into the streets and see the early stars above the gable-ends and high cathedral tower. They think it cold and walk quickly, but a personage of sandstone takes little note of the temperature. The cathedral merely feels refreshed.

When the clear windy night draws in the people go to rest, and one by one the lights are put out till only the stars and the lighthouses are left. Looking over a darkened town and an empty night, with the air moving fresh from Norway, the memories come thick upon the old church which shelters so many bones. It is like digging up the soil of those lands from which the sea has for centuries receded, and where the ribs of ships and

the skeletons of sailors lie deep beneath the furrows of the plough.

Kirkwall must have been a strange little town before the cathedral's memory begins, when there was no red tower above the narrow street and the little houses, in the days when Rognvald the son of Kol had vowed to dedicate a splendid minster to his uncle Saint Magnus, should he come by his own and call himself Earl of Orkney; and when the islanders waited to see what aid the blessed saint would furnish to this enterprise.

It is one of the island tragedies,—the saga of how the evil Earl Hakon slew his cousin Earl Magnus outside the old church of Egilsay with that high round tower that you can see over Kirkwall bay from the cathedral parapet; and how the grass grew greener where he fell, and miracles multiplied, and they made him a saint in time.

Though all these events happened before a stone of the cathedral was laid, they may help to give the meaning of its story, and on that account they are worth, perhaps, a rough telling here. Earl Hakon had died, and his son Paul ruled in his stead. He was a silent, brave, unlucky man, upright and honourable in his dealings, but the shadow of his father's crime lay over the land. It brought old age and prosperity and repentance to the doer of the deed; on his son the punishment fell.

Rognvald claimed the half of the earldom. Paul answered that there was no need for long words, "For I will guard the Orkneys while God grants me life so to do." And then the contest began. Rognvald attacked from north and south: Paul vanquished the southern fleet and hurrying north drove his rival back to Norway; and so the winter came on and the peace that in those days men kept in winter.

All had gone well with Paul, but his luck was to change with a little thing. He was keeping Yule with his friends and kinsmen, when, upon a winter's evening, a man, wet with the spray of the Pentland Firth, came out of the dusk and knocked upon the door. He was hardly the instrument, one would think, a departed saint would choose to build a cathedral with, a viking with his sword ever loose in its sheath, and his lucky star obscured, coming here for refuge from the ashes of his father and his home. He was known as Swein Asleifson (a name to be famous in the islands) and welcomed for his family's sake; they brought him in to the feast, and the drinking went on. In a little while there arose a quarrel over the cups; Swein killed his man and fled out into the night again. He was a landless outlaw this time, for the dead man had been high in favour and the Earl was stern. Meanwhile men went on drinking over the hall fires, but Paul's luck had departed, and Saint Magnus had a weapon to his hand. In the spring the war began again, and suddenly in the midst of it Earl Paul disappeared, his body-guard cut down upon the beach, himself spirited clean away. Swein Asleifson had come for him and carried him to a fate that was never more than rumoured. So Rognvald won the earldom, and the first stones of his church were laid. The Saint had certainly struck for him.

That is the true story of the vow and the building of the cathedral, a tale too old for even the venerable church to remember. But all the long history of the seven centuries since it knows, and indeed it has played such a part in scene after scene and act after act, that a memory would have to be of some poorer stuff than hewed sandstone to forget a past so stirring. And who

can be so far behind every scene as the house which during men's lives listens to their prayers, and at last upon a day takes them in for ever?

When it first began to look down from its windows upon those men going about their business in the sunshine or the rain, it saw among the little creatures some that were well worth remembering, though there be few but the cathedral to remember them now. There was Rognvald himself, that cheerful, gallant Earl who made poetry and war, and sailed to Jerusalem with all his chiefs and friends, fighting and rhyming on the way, and riding home across the length of Europe, and who, when he fell by an assassin's hand, was laid at last beneath the pavement of this cathedral he had founded. And then, most memorable of all the great Odallers who followed him in war and sat at his Yule feasts, there was the viking Swein Asleifson, he who kidnapped Paul and afterwards became the lifelong and, on the whole, faithful friend of Rognvald, and the faithless enemy of almost everyone else; the most daring, unscrupulous, famous and, judging by the way he always obtained forgiveness when he needed it, the most fascinating man in all the northern countries. He was the luckiest, too, till the day he fell in an ambush in the streets of Dublin, exclaiming with his last breath, in most remarkable contrast to the tenor of his life: "Know this, all men, that I am one of the Saint Earl Rognvald's body-guard, and I now mean to put my trust in being where he is, with God." May he rest in peace, wherever his bones lie, even though his reformation came something late, the turbulent, terrible old viking, whom the saga-writers called the last of that profession.

The generation who built it had

passed away, when on a summer's day, after it had weathered nearly a century of storm and shine, the cathedral saw the greatest sight it had yet beheld. Haco of Norway had come with his fleet to reconquer the western isles of Scotland, the Norse kings' old inheritance. The pointed windows watched ship after ship sail by with coloured sails and shining shields, bearing the Norsemen to their last battle in southern lands; and then the islands waited for the news that in those days was brought by the men who had made the story.

Month upon month went by; men wondered and rumours flew; the days grew shorter and the gales came out of all the seas. At last, when winter was well upon the islands, what were left of the battered ships began to straggle home. They brought back stories that the cathedral remembers, though six centuries have rolled them out of the memories of the people; tales of lee-shores and westerly gales, of anchors dragging under the Cumbræes, and Scottish knights charging down upon the beach where the Norwegian spears were ranked on the edge of the tide. Then of more gales and whirl-pools in the Pentland, until at length they carried their old sick king ashore to die in the bishop's palace at Kirkwall.

He lay for two months in that ancient building, now a roofless shell, standing just beyond the churchyard wall, his most faithful friends beside him, the restless Orkney wind without, and the voice of the saga-reader by the bed. First they read to him in Latin till he grew too sick to follow the foreign words, and then in Norse, through the sagas of the saints, and after of the kings. They had come down to his own father Sverrir, and then in the words of the old historian: "Near midnight

Sverrir's saga was read through, and just as midnight was past, Almighty God called King Haco from this world's life." They buried him in the great red church that had stood sentinel over the sick chamber, and as the race of vikings died with Swein, so the roving, conquering kings of Norway passed away with Haco, and never again came south to trouble the seaboard.

The Orkneys, however, were not yet out of the current of affairs. They cut, indeed, but a small figure compared with the Orkney of the great Earl Thorfinn in the century before Rognvald founded his cathedral, he who owned nine earldoms in Scotland and all the southern isles, besides a great realm in Ireland. But there was still a bishop in the palace, and an earl with powers of life and death in his dominion, and an armed following that counted for something in war; and the cathedral was still the church of a small country rather than of a little county. The sun cast the shadows of dignitaries in the winding street, and the bones they were framed of were laid in time beneath the flags of St. Magnus's Church. When one comes to think of it, the old cathedral must hold a varied collection of these, for here lie the high and low of two races and no man knows how many chance sojourners and travellers.

At last, upon a dark day for the islands, their era of semi-independence and vikingism and Norse romance came to a most undignified end. A needy king of the North pledged them to Scotland for his daughter's dowry, as a common man might pledge his watch. East to Norway was no longer the way to the motherland, and the open horizon meeting the clouds, the old high road, led now to a foreign shore. Henceforth they belonged to the long coast, with



its pale mountain-peaks far away over the cliffs, which had once, so far as the eye could see, belonged to them. It was a transaction intended for a season, but the season has never run to its limit yet. Now, it is to be hoped it never will; but for centuries it would have been better for the Orkneys if they had gone the way of some volcanic islet and sunk quietly below the grey North Sea.

One might think that, when they had ceased to be a half-way house between their sovereign and his neighbours of Europe, and were become instead a geographical term applied to the least accessible portion of their new lord's dominions, that their history and their troubles would soon have ceased, and the islanders been left to fish, and reap late crops and try to keep the winter weather out. But there was no such good luck for many a day to come. Alas for themselves! they were too valuable an asset in the Scotch king's treasury. Orkney too valuable! That collection of windy, treeless islands, where great ponds of rain-water stand through the fields for months together, and a strawberry that ripens is shown to one's friends. The plain truth is that, measured by a Scotch standard of value in those days, it would have been hard to find a pocket not worth the picking. The rental of Orkney was more than twice that of the kingdom of Fife, and Fife, I suppose, was an El Dorado compared with most provinces of its impecunious country. So north they came, Scotch earls and bishops and younger sons, to make what they could before the pledge was redeemed. And to the old cathedral was flung the shame of standing as the symbol of oppression. It was not its fault, and every stone must have silently cried to Heaven for forgiveness. But a cathedral meant a bishop, and an Orkney

bishop meant the refinement of roguery and exaction. When these prelates in their turns came to permanently inhabit their minster, and they could at last hear the voice of its spirit that loves the land it watches, demanding an account of their stewardship, what should they say? The old excuse, "we must live"? I can hardly think the church perceived the necessity.

That monument which the old sailors and fighters of the North had built that they might link a better world with the rough and warring earth, had to stand immoveable for century upon century, watching the trouble of their sons. It saw them make their stand at Summerdale in the old fashion, with sword and halbert, and a battle-cry on their lips, and march back again to the town in a glimpse of triumph. But that quickly faded, and the weight of new laws and evil rulers gradually broke the high spirit entirely. It saw the proud Odallers reduced to long-suffering "peerie lairds," and all their power and romance and circumstance of state pass over to the foreigner; until after a time it was hard to believe that some pages further back there was a closed chapter of history which read quite differently from this.

Down below the parapet of the tower the narrow streets were full of the most splendid-looking people, all in steel and the Stuart arms,—well bar-sinistered if their heraldry was accurate. Earls Robert and Patrick of that royal name, each, through his scandalous life, made the island the home of a prince's court; and out among the moors and the islands the old race wondered whose turn it should be for persecution next, and how long Heaven would let these things be.

The downfall of the Stuarts' rule

came at last, violently as was fit, but to the end they used the old church on behalf of the wrong. The tower was wrapped in the smoke of the rebels' musketry when old Earl Patrick lay by the heels in Edinburgh awaiting his doom as a traitor, and his son held Kirkwall against what might, by comparison, be termed the Law, and it was only at the point of the pike that they turned the last Stuart out of the sepulchre of St. Magnus.

Then the long windows watched the shadows of all manner of persons, who are well forgotten now, darken the prospect for a while, and pass away to let other clouds gather; and in all that time there cannot have been many whom a critical edifice can recall with pride.

The bishops were sent about their business and the solemn League and Covenant as solemnly sworn. The troopers of Cromwell stalked through the old pillars with their wide hats the firmer set on. The Covenant was unsworn, and the bishops came back and acquired emoluments for a little while longer, till at last they went altogether, and in good, sober Presbyterian fashion the awakened people set about purifying their temple. Poor old church! they did it thoroughly. Away went carving and stained glass, and ancient tombs and bones, and everything that the austere taste of Heaven is supposed by man to dislike. They made it clean with a kind of yellowish white-wash, and divided it by a sanitary deal screen impervious to draught. In this shameful guise, more like a human sinner penitent during his Majesty's pleasure than the symbol of God on earth, the cathedral has watched the advent of quiet days

and the slow healing of time. To-day the greatest clamour it hears is made by the rooks. No earl's men or bishop's men quarrel in the street; no one either fears or harries the islanders; the history of Orkney is written and closed and laid upon the shelf. The hands of the clock move evenly round, and the seasons change by the almanack.

But there stands the old red church, silently remembering and arranging in their due prospective all these things, remarkable and true. The worst of it is that it makes no comment that a mortal can understand, so that no one can say what a seasoned, well-mortared observer of seven centuries of affairs thinks of changing dynasties and creeds, and whether it is disposed to take them more seriously than so many moultings of feathers, and if one can retain any optimism through a course of white-wash and draught-proof screens.

It is pleasant to think, for the old minster's sake, that it heeds the rubs of fortune very little, and regards material changes just as so many shifts of plumage. Its people are still flesh and blood and its islands rock and turf and heather, and it will take more than pails and paint-brushes, and pledges and Covenants, to make them otherwise. The winter days are as bleak as ever, and the summer evenings as long and light, and the sun rises out of the North Sea among the flat green islands, and sinks in the Atlantic behind the western heather hills; and it is likely enough that from the height of the cathedral tower many other most serious events look surprisingly unimportant.

J. STORER CLOUSTON.

## SOME ASPECTS OF ZOLA.

"Immoral?" said the distinguished novelist to a provincial bookseller, "Gogol, the father of Russian literature, immoral?" "Perhaps," came the stolid self-satisfied reply, "I am thinking of Zola." This portentous ignorance was hardly surpassed by that of the well-known schoolmaster who, while rebuking the Institute of Journalists for entertaining the French novelist, was not ashamed to confess that he had not read a line of his works. But puerile as such an attitude is, it is difficult not to be disgusted by the deluge of words, of cheap praise and equally cheap abuse now pouring from the Press about that tragic figure in the Rue de Bruxelles. It is, of course, impossible for anyone of this generation to find the true perspective in which to view Zola's work; but to one outside the clash of passion, excited equally by his revolt from the Parnassians and his interference in the Dreyfus case, an attempt at a sane and temperate estimate may be permitted.

To the present writer, a lover of France and her literature, Zola produces the same effect as when, after standing on one of the most beautiful bridges in the world, the Pont Alexandre Trois, guarded by golden Pegasi and the stone lions of Dalou, one comes upon the Eiffel Tower. It is immense, imposing, and—intolerable. In vain do the mechanicians point out the masses of which it is composed, the principles violated in its construction, the enormous panorama of which it commands a view; to the artistic mind it remains a blot on Paris, a reproach to a generation that

has turned its back on the beautiful. So to us Zola remains a Cyclops,—gigantic in industry and force, but always a Cyclops, glaring with one eye upon the plague-spots of the world, but blind to the most beautiful and most spiritual aspects of literature and life.

In his early life he gave other promise. Indeed there are few figures in literature more appealing than that of the young Provençal, timid and stammering, jeered at by the smart Parisian students as *Le Marseillais*, yet indomitable in work and hope. Mr. Sherard has drawn an interesting parallel between him and Chatterton on his arrival in London, but the advantages were, apparently, all on the side of the Marvellous Boy. He, at least, had five pounds in his pocket and introductions to various distinguished citizens; Emile Zola was penniless, and had, moreover, his mother to support. Very fine, very pathetic, is the account of his bitter struggle for bread; and yet this boy of nineteen, writing in his garret with icy fingers, living on three halfpenny-worth of potatoes, or bread fried in oil, varied by an occasional sparrow roasted on a curtain hook, describes himself as perfectly happy,—for then he had the magic of youth, the talisman of poetry. Wonderful to relate, the founder of the Roman Experimental, the crudest school of naturalistic realism, spent two years writing poetry. He even projected an immense epic, *LA GENÈSE*, in three books, the first dealing with the beginning of all things down to the appearance of man on this planet, the second with his past, and the third

with his gradual evolution heavenwards. Of this great conception eight mediocre lines alone survive. For Zola was the child of heredity, of his own day. From his father, a young Venetian who had abandoned Italy from dislike to the Austrian rule, he inherited a tendency to Bohemianism and a Herculean industry in devoting himself to great schemes. As the father, François Zola, dedicated ten years of his life to providing the people of Aix with good drinking water from a canal of his own construction, on the banks of which the mistral struck him for death, so the son Emile devoted himself to the cult of the Roman Experimental.

My novels [he said] have always been written with a loftier aim than merely to amuse. I have so high an opinion of the novel as a means of expression that I have chosen it as the form in which to present to the world what I wish to say on the social, scientific, and psychological problems that occupy the minds of thinking men. I might have said what I wanted to say in another form; but the novel has to-day risen from the place which it held in the last century at the banquet of letters. It was then the idle pastime of the hour, and sat low down between the fable and the idyll. To-day it contains, or may be made to contain, everything, and it is because that is my creed that I have become a novelist. I have, as I believe, certain contributions to make to the thought of the world on certain subjects, and I have chosen the novel as the best means of communicating them to the world.

Then, as the literary movement is inevitably affected by the scientific movement running parallel with it, the age which saw Pasteur's research in the laboratory saw Zola's research after human documents. And as the chemist is not daunted by ugliness in his material, neither is the novelist by the vileness of the drugs in which he works. To a just and thinking mind, while it is unfair almost to

baseness to accuse Zola of being a deliberate corrupter of youth, a grave charge lies in the fact that his science is so often faulty, purblind, wanting. He is a singularly poor observer, and his deductions are frequently false. Take, for instance, one of his famous declarations of faith put into the mouth of the old chemist in PARIS.

And how many times have I told you that science alone is the world's revolutionary force, the only force which far above all paltry political incidents, the vain agitations of despots, priests, sectarians, ambitious peoples of all kinds, works for the benefit of those who will come after us, and prepares the triumph of truth, justice and peace? If you wish to overturn the world by striving to set a little more happiness in it, you have only to remain in your laboratory here, for human happiness can only spring from the furnace of the scientist.

The logic here is absolutely false. Human happiness never has sprung, never can spring from the furnace of the scientist. Science is as old as man himself; it began when the first cave-man fitted a flint-head to his axe for combat with the first cave-bear. Krupp and Maxim guns may make for happiness, but the proposition is, to say the least of it, doubtful. What justice do we find in Nature? Little, indeed, of that justice which this singular apostle so vaunts above charity. Much, however, may be explained by the fact that Zola early turned from the teaching of Montaigne, the master of that true artist, Alphonse Daudet, no less than of our own Shakespeare, to follow that of Rabelais. "*Je me moque parfaitement d'Hamlet!*" he wrote on one occasion. But the Prince of Denmark has his revenge. He moves, and shall move, an eternal figure before endless generations of seeking souls when the whole Rougon-Macquart series is forgotten.

Having startled Europe with *L'ASSOMMOIR*, Zola devoted himself with unflagging industry, for close on twenty years, to developing this partly psychical, but still more physiological, study of a family under the Second Empire. As all the world knows, its principal thesis is the doctrine of heredity; and those who had predicted that this young disciple of Stendhal and Flaubert would prove the greatest of living novelists suffered a disappointment. For truly to fill that rôle, one must first have the gift of creative imagination corrected and fortified by contact with reality. And in spite of his theories so loudly and strenuously insisted upon, it is precisely in fidelity to truth that Zola fails. What did the recluse of Médan know of contemporary France? Schools of thought rose and waned of which he knew nothing, the whole Naturalistic movement ebbed away, to be followed by the Romantic reaction culminating in the Symbolists and *CYRANO DE BERGERAC*. Italy, for ten years a storehouse of Lombroso's tractates on criminology, returned to the cult of the poets with unfeigned joy; yet Zola, who to the last learned no language but his own, still manufactured novels according to a discredited formula. His incapacity for apprehending art, for instance, is shown by the fact that not even his intimate acquaintance with the painter Manet enabled him to draw a more life-like figure of an artist than the detestable Lantier in *L'ŒUVRE*, or to differentiate the conversation of French artists in the last decade of the nineteenth century, to any appreciable extent, from that of French bullock-drivers in that apocryphal period the Second Empire. Conversation is indeed one of his weakest points, an ugly and limited vocabulary being common alike to his

ladies and his washerwomen, his princes of the Church and his soldiers. Nor are his types in any way truly national; his French officers are neither officers nor Frenchmen; his priests would be repudiated by every order; his women fall inevitably into two categories, the negatively ideal like Albine, Dr. Pascal's daughter, or the unspeakable like Nana.

To what, then, must be attributed the enormous sensation he has made? First, one fears, to the fact that, like Baudelaire, he has torn away the veil from those unimaginable horrors the final corruptions which for six thousand years the more spiritual man has tried to conceal even from his inmost thought; then to the recognition of some righteous flame, some genuine *Sava indignatio* on behalf of the suffering down-trodden ranks of humanity, and unquestionably to his strange, colossal imagination. True, according to his own theory, a novelist has no business with an imagination: he only wants a notebook; but in so far as his work contradicted his theories, just in so far did he triumph. No writer can compare with him in the treatment of crowds, of external surroundings, of personifications of the concrete. Take, in respect of the first, the unforgettable wanderings of the army in *LA DEBACLE*, its accumulated sufferings, whether it climbed to its Calvary under the blast of the Prussian guns or perished in the hospital; even the miseries of the great troop of riderless horses haunt the imagination. Houses, machinery, even a railway train, become in his hands alive and sinister. For the individual Zola has little pity; of the human heart he has little knowledge. "It is salutary," a defender of his moral teaching has written, "to be horrified and sickened, when the horror and the sickening make one look around, pause, and



reflect." But why should one visit the Morgue, or the wards of a cancer hospital, unless endowed with a talisman to help the dying and the dead? And that Zola was possessed, one might almost say hallucinated, by the animal in man, the lowest and basest physical aspect of things, is sufficiently proved by his handling of his subject in *L'ŒUVRE*. The theme is a simple one: a great painter who marries and then falls in love with his art instead of his wife. Such a story in the hands of Paul Bourget or Tourguéniev would be a little tragedy, touching and spiritual. In Zola's, there is a brutality of treatment, an indescribable imagery which translates it gratuitously into the domain of the vile. Perhaps in order to show the world that he, too, could be idyllic and romantic, he wrote *Le Réve*, in which he merely demonstrated his lack of any fine sense of romance, his inability to picture maidenhood. "Let Zola remain Zola," said an admirable French critic; "let him leave untouched the month of Mary and the soul of a girl."

He is perhaps at his best in describing the fine figure of Doctor Pascal with his love of work, his devotion to science, who, with stoic heroism, takes notes of his own death-agonies, and in the first of the trilogy *Les Trois Villes*. By a wonderful accumulation of detail, by slow touches, a profoundly moving picture is given of the sufferers on their way to Lourdes, especially those in the terrible "white" train, and again of their heartrending faith, their cry to a deaf Heaven in the midnight procession. It seems as if that cry must echo down the ages. One figure links the three books together, that of the Abbé Froment who, having made shipwreck of his faith at Lourdes, goes to Rome, in singularly unconvincing fashion, to convert the Pope. So far as size

goes, *ROME* is a colossal performance. There are some seven hundred and fifty pages of it, treating of centuries of old Rome, centuries of pagan Rome, Rome republican, imperial, medieval, Christian, in fact of Rome under every aspect except in that mysterious, essential form in which she has always dominated the imagination of the world. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate Zola's industry,—and his barrenness of soul—than this stupendous compilation. Some fine strokes of satire there are, undoubtedly; but was there ever an Italian cardinalate so little subtle, a Pope so far below the dignity of his great office, or a love-affair so unlovely? In *PARIS* the same gigantic machinery is set in motion, but what life there was in it to start with is soon suffocated by the very weight of the frame-work; yet the wheels go creaking and grinding on. It is overwhelmingly dull. Almost the only point of interest in it is that the author abandons the hopeless fatalism of his earlier work for a more human sympathy with Positivist doctrines. Still more optimistic is his attitude in *FECONDITÉ*, in which there are some charming pictures of the domestic happiness of Mathieu and Marianne. But is the pleasure given by contemplating groups of young children to be counterbalanced by the nightmare-horrors of surgical dens? Surely Zola is at times the most terrible preacher that ever afflicted humanity.

In relation to public life Zola's name will be for ever associated with the Dreyfus case, by his famous letter *J'ACCUSE*. We know what has been the verdict of England, how from having been proscribed as a writer, Zola was welcomed with open arms,—or to speak literally, with fireworks from the Crystal Palace—as the one righteous man in Sodom, the one upholder of the innocent victim against



a perjured Government. It is not proposed to re-try the case here and now. But candour recalls how, to an impartial observer of the trial at Rennes, Captain Dreyfus appeared, somewhat plainly, an unheroic, enigmatic figure, how the French Government obstinately refused to show its hand. An inconvenient and unpopular conscience, moreover, will insist on asking,—“If at the worst part of the war in South Africa, in the dark days of Stormberg and Magersfontein, George Meredith had written to *THE TIMES* denouncing one general for inefficiency, another for favouritism, and a third for insobriety, the action might have been brave, disinterested, sincere, but could it, in a high and noble sense, have been called patriotic?” The truth is that, even with the fine words of M. Anatole France’s peroration ringing in our ears, it is difficult to attribute the highest moral qualities to one in whom the commercial instinct and the love of notoriety were the ruling passions. Zola boasted openly that he had written a novel on the ruin of France without offending the susceptibilities of his Prussian customers. The large sums earned by his novels were spent in vulgar decoration, florid architecture, and heavy feeding. The man of letters was not welcome at Médan which was overrun with the reporter, the translator out of every nation and every tribe, from Greenland to Patagonia. The test of every novel was, “How many hundred thousand copies will sell?” and the man who began as an enormous intellectual force ended as a mere bookmaker. His private life, one admits with pleasure, was wholly blameless, and his attitude towards Dreyfus was at least touched with generosity.

It would be equally presumptuous and futile to forecast the verdict of posterity upon the mass of work he has left behind, though it may be predicted that his highest praise will be based on this, that he never feared to lash hypocrisy and sloth; but one last word of personal impression may be permitted. “How many phantoms,” wrote Chateaubriand, in a fine phrase, “have I seen defile through the dream of life?” Through the deeper dream of Zola’s fiction we pass into a world full of monstrous shapes, sinister and fatal, a world without harmony, gaiety, or beauty of form, without mystery, fragrance, or twilight. Its chief illumination, after a garish daylight, is the electric arc, the nursery night-light, and the bicycle-lamp. Doubtless these are good in their own places; but the soul demands more, the rose of dawn, the mystic promise of the rainbow, the soft eyes of lovers, steadfast even in the grisly face of Death, the shining of the stars, some hint of that divine force which, whether called the kingdom of God or the evolution of the soul, works for the salvation of man, from within and not from without. The reproach, it must be admitted, justly brought against the Idealist is this, that, sunk in dreams of Tir n’an-Og, or Heaven itself, he leaves living children to die, the slum to fester at his gate, and human wreckage to strew the streets; but when he awakes there is no more passionate helper of humanity. The reproach against Zola is this, that he materialised the ideal. To revert to a former metaphor, he remains a Cyclops, a giant who, half in brutal wantonness, half because he was unaware of her existence, caught Psyche in his hand and bruised the beauty of her wings.

## THE IMPERIALISM OF CROMWELL.

THE foundations of the English Empire were laid during the seventeenth century. When that era opened, there were no established trading connections between this country and the East, and some fishing rights in Newfoundland constituted our only territorial claims in the West. Before it closed, however, the East India Company had obtained a firm footing in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal, and had already entered on its career of conquest. We had some possessions on the Guinea coast, and held Jamaica, Barbados, and other West Indian Islands, while our colonies stretched in an unbroken line on the Atlantic seaboard from Florida to Canada. The rapid growth of these distant possessions is a demonstration of the extraordinary enterprise which Englishmen were showing both in commerce and colonisation. Mercantile activity has always served as a pioneer and has extended our political influence in all parts of the globe, even though naval or military expeditions have subsequently been necessary to hold and maintain the positions occupied by cultivators and traders. The bases of the British Empire were laid in the seventeenth century; this was its lasting achievement, and the work was accomplished by men who were strongly influenced by economic motives.

It is equally true that one figure stands out in the history of England during the seventeenth century as unique. There is something extraordinarily dramatic in the rise of Oliver Cromwell from a position of comparative obscurity to supreme authority

not only in the Army, but in the State also. He has been described by Professor Gardiner as a typical Englishman; and some who doubt whether the traits which mark his character are widely diffused in the present day, would yet assert that his life was thoroughly typical of the dominant political and religious forces of the middle of the seventeenth century in England. It seems to follow, almost as a matter of course, that he should be expected to take a leading part in the work of colonisation and commercial expansion and empire building, which was the principal achievement of the ages from which he drew his inspiration and on which he left so deep a mark. Recent writers have vied with one another in attributing to him a keen interest in economic progress and the consequent expansion of England. Dr. Beer, of Columbia College, who has studied the later policy of England towards the American colonies most carefully, lays stress on this element in connection with Cromwell's expedition to the West Indies: "Economic motives were the cause, religious motives the justification of the West Indian project. . . . In fighting Spain, Cromwell believed that he was fighting the Lord's battles. But there can be no doubt that these battles would never have been fought, if victory in them would not have added to England power and greatness."<sup>1</sup> Seeley's judgment, "That notions of trade seem at most but secondary in his mind" is dismissed with scorn

<sup>1</sup> QUARTERLY REVIEW OF POLITICAL SCIENCE (New York), xvi., 608-11.

as based "on a lack of knowledge of the facts," since, according to Dr. Beer, the fundamental motives for the expedition were "economic." Mr. Wolf, in his interesting monograph on the re-admission of the Jews, is even more decided in his statement.

The Re-admission of the Jews to England was one of Cromwell's own schemes,—part and parcel of that dream of Imperial expansion which filled his later days with its stupendous administration and vanished so tragically with his early death—it is impossible to doubt. . . . Cromwell's statecraft was, as I have said, not entirely or even essentially governed by religious policy. He desired to make England great and prosperous as well as pious and free. . . . The Jews could not but appeal to him as very desirable instruments for his colonial and commercial policy.<sup>1</sup>

Sir William Hunter expresses the same view in a forcible fashion: "As he set himself while still a cavalry colonel to form an army of victory at home, so he resolved, as head of the Commonwealth, to create a marine which should give England predominance abroad. The Navigation Act of 1651 served as his new model for winning the supremacy of the seas."<sup>2</sup>

In the face of these confident assertions I venture to put forward a few reasons for thinking that Seeley's insight did not play him false in this matter, and that Cromwell was but little concerned with the progress in commerce and colonisation which brought about the expansion of England.

In the first place it is worth while to point out that there was during this period no marked development of trade policy. Various steps were taken under the Council of State and the Protectorate for the benefit of

English commerce, and we may, if we like, ascribe them to the personal influence of Cromwell, though there does not seem to be much ground for doing so. There is, for example, no evidence that Cromwell had anything to do with the passing of the Navigation Act. On the day when he was writing his well-known despatch about the "crowning mercy" at Worcester, the House was sitting in Committee on the Bill which had already passed its second reading; he did not join the Committee on Trade till some weeks later. A contemporary writer regarded him as out of sympathy with the policy of the measure. Roger Coke held that the Navigation Act was merely mischievous in its effects on English trade; but, much as he disliked Cromwell, he makes the grudging admission that "Old Oliver looked coldly" upon it and constantly set it aside by granting licences.<sup>1</sup> But whether Cromwell directed the trade policy of the Commonwealth or not, it is worth while to point out that no evidence has been brought forward which shows that the authorities during the Interregnum entertained new ideas as to the line that ought to be pursued. The Civil War in England had led to a considerable disturbance of trade, and the execution of the King had raised a scandal which rendered the position of English merchants in France, Spain, Portugal, and other countries exceedingly difficult; while royalist privateers, and the ships of other nations preyed upon English commerce. The resentment in Russia was so keen that trading relations were broken off by the Czar, and the hostility of the Spaniards was very injurious. The footing which English merchants had purchased for them-

<sup>1</sup> MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL'S MISSION TO OLIVER CROMWELL, *Introduction*, p. xxix.

<sup>2</sup> HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA, ii., 107.

<sup>1</sup> DISCOURSE OF TRADE (1670), p. 22.

selves in Andalusia in 1645 was lost, and it was not till after the Restoration (in 1667) that their privileges were so enlarged and extended that they had any chance of competing there with the Dutch. To this extent at all events the Protector failed to recover the ground which had been lost during the troubles at home.

It is of course true that Cromwell had control of a much finer navy than was possessed by Charles the First, but it would be a mistake to suppose that that monarch was either indifferent to the maintenance of maritime power or careless about the protection of merchant-shipping. The necessity of repelling the attacks of Algerian pirates had been the reason put forward for levying Ship-money, and there are constant references in the State Papers to the employment of royal ships on convoy service. The troubles connected with the Civil War greatly increased the risks to traders, but it does not seem that the Council of State, though they gave some attention to the subject in 1650, were successful in supplying adequate protection even to vessels engaged in the coasting trade. The attempt to provide convoys for the Levant trade was costly, while an occasional raid, like Blake's attack on the nest of pirates at Tunis, only seems to have increased the ordinary risks of English trade in these parts. Many dismal complaints of loss were made during the last years of the Protectorate; and it was only after the Restoration that an effective convoy system at moderate rates was organised, so as to enable the English merchant to compete with the Dutch.

Cromwell was more fortunate in his dealings with Portugal, and he negotiated a treaty which was of importance to English merchants. With the restoration of the House

of Braganza in 1640 the Portuguese territories in Brazil and the settlements in India were cut off from Spanish influence, and it was important that English merchants should have a favourable reception at Lisbon, and be free to engage in the distant trades for which Portuguese shipping did not suffice, as well as in the carrying trade in European waters. There was an ancient amity between the Crowns of England and of Portugal, and in 1642 Charles had completed a treaty which renewed the old relations and gave English merchants a satisfactory footing. Not unnaturally the King of Portugal favoured the royalist cause, and gave shelter and assistance to Prince Rupert in the time of the Commonwealth. It was a triumph for the diplomacy of the Protector that he was able to heal the breach that had arisen and to obtain the restoration of the English merchants to a position similar to, though not so favourable as, that which Charles had secured for them; but in this there was nothing new.

From the time of Queen Elizabeth, to go no farther back, English rulers had endeavoured to obtain access to the Baltic trade on favourable terms,—especially as regards the tolls exacted at the Sound. Cromwell was successful in negotiating with Denmark to obtain the concession that the English should pay no higher tolls than those demanded of the most favoured nation. It does not appear, however, that the English were able to take much advantage of this turn of affairs; there was a lack of shipping suitable for the Baltic trade, and the Navigation Act of 1651 had made it impossible to import timber and naval stores in Dutch bottoms. So great was the mischief accruing to the maritime interest of the realm from the

deficiency of these commodities that it was necessary to relax the provisions of the Navigation Act over and over again; but the Muscovy trade, the Eastland trade, and the Northern trades do not seem to have developed to any extent under the Protectorate, or even to have recovered the measure of prosperity they had enjoyed under Charles.

Those, however, who insist on Cromwell's eagerness to promote maritime and imperial interests do not profess to rest their case so much on what he actually accomplished as on the policy which was adopted while he had a prominent place in public affairs. The Navigation Act of 1651 has often been said to mark a turning-point in the relative position of England and Holland on the seas. It was passed with the definite intention of attacking the Dutch supremacy in the commerce of the world, and under its regis English shipping did certainly increase until, in the course of the eighteenth century, it outstripped that of Holland altogether. How far the Act in question contributed to this result it is difficult to say; partly because it is clear that for considerable periods it was not enforced, and that its operation was occasionally suspended. Constant complaints have come down to us as to its mischievous effects on English trade, and all that we are able to say is that the experts who persisted in maintaining its principles, and who tried to put them in practice, were probably better informed as to its working than anyone can be in the present day. We may come, with some hesitation, to the conclusion that it benefited English shipping, and to that extent did some negative injury to Holland; the Dutch did not in all probability increase as much as they would have done. But there is no evidence that

it inflicted more than a temporary inconvenience or that it caused positive injury to the United Provinces. The commerce and industry of the country continued to advance till the middle of the eighteenth century; the energy of the Dutch may have been deflected from ocean voyages to those nearer trades which Adam Smith deemed to be more profitable. But apart altogether from the difficult question as to how far this measure served its purpose and injured the Dutch, there is little reason to suppose that the policy was a new departure. Navigation Acts of one sort or another had been in operation at various dates from the time of Richard the Second; in the time of Elizabeth the expedient of limiting commerce to English ships had been somewhat discredited, as it was found that it provoked counter-restrictions in other lands and might reduce commercial intercourse to a dead-lock. James the First had remitted the consideration of the subject to his Council of Trade in 1622, and it certainly assumed a new importance with the growth of the tobacco and sugar colonies in Virginia and the West Indies. These plantations, which were not utilised for subsistence farming, but for the growth of valuable commodities for export, had been founded and were maintained with the help of the capital of English merchants, and it seemed fair that they should have a first claim to the profits that might accrue from the commerce. During the war with France Charles the First had been in favour of allowing other ships to be employed;<sup>1</sup> but the intrusion of Dutch merchants became so general that in 1637 he adopted another policy and endeavoured to drive the Hollanders out of the trade alto-

<sup>1</sup> Sept. 5, 1627: *Hist. MSS. Com.*, iii. 69.



gether. He enjoined the Governor of Virginia to "strictly and resolutely forbid all trade or trading with any Dutch ship that shall either purposely or casually come to any of your plantations." If, however, in extremity they made an exception he insisted that "good caution and bond be taken both by the Dutch master as also of the owners of the said tobacco and other commodities so laden that they shall without fraud be brought to our port of London." Here we have the principle of the Navigation Acts as regards both ships and commodities; and a proclamation of 1629 also anticipates that measure in applying similar restrictions to the Eastland trade.

Under these circumstances it is difficult to admit the claim made on behalf of Cromwell, or to recognise that he exercised any very great influence on the economic development and expansion of England. Commercial affairs do not seem to have prospered greatly under his rule, and the measures which he took in regard to them were for the most part directly borrowed from the system of Charles. We are able to press the argument a little further, however, and to show that he was half-hearted or careless about matters that were essential to the growth of English maritime power, and that his ideas, so far from being in advance of those of his contemporaries, were actually retrograde.

The Tudors and the Stuarts had endeavoured to direct commercial intercourse into channels which might promote the maritime strength of England as a fighting power. The gravest defect in the Navigation Act was its application to the Baltic trade, since it seems to have caused an interruption of the ordinary means of communication and increased the

difficulty of procuring naval stores; and Cromwell showed a curious disregard of another element of national strength. The best hope of obtaining a supply of saltpetre and having the means of making gunpowder lay in the development of the East India trade. James and Charles had both been eagerly interested in the supply of saltpetre; they did not indeed show any great enthusiasm for strengthening the monopoly of the East India Company, and they frequently exercised their power of authorising particular voyages on the part of independent traders. Cromwell's position was very different; he aspired to ape the pretensions of Alexander the Third, and proposed to divide the world between the two maritime Protestant Powers. His suggestion was that the Dutch should withdraw from America, and that Englishmen should abandon their position in the East. So far was he from promoting the expansion of commercial enterprise that he was prepared to limit English shippers to one hemisphere, and to let the country become dependent on our chief antagonist for its main supply of powder. Such a scheme would hardly have been put forward by a man who was either alive to the advantage of commercial progress, or sensitive as to the economic conditions of national power; when the plan for withdrawing from the Indies altogether fell to the ground, his Council of Trade recommended strengthening the position of the Company so that it might fight its own battles in the East.

His ideas on colonisation are still more curious. Under James and Charles the planting of the American coast had gone steadily forward; the Governments were strongly in favour of the project in both reigns, as they recognised that a new England



beyond the seas would be an effective check on the dominance of Spanish influence, and would in itself add to the credit and prestige of this country. The English emigrants were not content to establish factories for trade as the Dutch did at New Amsterdam and the French at Montreal; still less were they content merely to mine. The constant object in view was the reproduction of a new rural England, with some large estates and many yeomen farmers. The policy of the Government was clear; they wished to avoid the mistake the Spaniards had made in establishing settlements which could only procure the necessities of life by trade. The English colonies were planted in the expectation that after the first year or two they would be able to grow the means of their own subsistence, and not be dependent on the advent of an occasional ship for sufficient food. The Northern colonies, round Massachusetts Bay, were devoted to subsistence farming and caused no trouble in this respect; but Virginia, the capitalist colony in the South, was in a different case. The London merchants who financed it, and the planters themselves, found it easier to devote all their energies to growing tobacco for export, and the Governments of James and Charles had to put repeated pressure on them to develop the production of cereals so that their economic existence might be secure even in the event of a war with Spain. But Cromwell was entirely careless in this matter; after the conquest of Jamaica he tried to induce the New Englanders to migrate from their plantations in the North to his new acquisition, and others were urged to return to Ireland. He would have sacrificed the hold which England had on the Northern sea-board, and the well-established subsistence farming there, for the development

of an island in which commodities could be produced for export. He deliberately abandoned the sound lines on which English colonisation was proceeding, and proposed to imitate the Spanish system, the weakness of which had been patent for fifty years. It is surely unreasonable to ascribe to Cromwell a large share in fostering colonial expansion, when his views on the subject were so retrograde.

It does not seem to me that any of the rulers of England in the seventeenth century played a conspicuous part in the commercial and colonial development which was the most striking feature of the times. "It had its spring," Mr. Morley says truly, "in the abiding demands of national circumstance, in the continuous activity of economic necessities upon a national character of incomparable energy and adventure. Such a policy was not and could not be the idea of one man, or the mark of a single generation."<sup>1</sup> Its success was almost entirely due to the enterprise of private citizens either acting personally, or when associated in companies. But after all, the sanction of Government was needed for the initiation of new schemes, and it may be said of the Stuarts, both before and after the Interregnum, that their attitude was both intelligent and sympathetic. They were entirely free from that jealousy of colonial development which came out so markedly in the parliaments of the later seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. They approved of colonisation as raising English prestige, and while they were concerned to strengthen the political connection with the mother country they did not take pains to hamper, though they might direct, economic development. They were besides

<sup>1</sup> OLIVER CROMWELL; by John Morley, p. 448.

careful to take the advice of experts, and in colonial matters they appear to have followed the views of Captain John Smith, whose *ADVICE TO YOUNG PLANTERS* seems thoroughly sensible when read in the light of the subsequent history of colonisation. He possibly was not strictly veracious when recounting his own dealings with the Indians, and he had his prejudices; he did not think much of the gentlemen in London who directed the affairs of Virginia from their Board-Room in the City; but James and Charles, possibly under his influence, played an exceedingly sensible and cordial part in these matters, in so far as they interfered. Of Cromwell it may be enough to say that when once liberty of conscience was sufficiently established in England itself, he seems to have felt that the main reason for migrating to new shores was gone, and that the action he took towards the colonists in suggesting another removal was neither sympathetic nor intelligent.

On these various grounds I venture to reiterate Seeley's view that notions of trade did not play a large part in Cromwell's policy. Seeley undoubtedly wrote, as we all must, without full knowledge of the facts; but it seems to me that the more the facts are studied, the more fully is Seeley's opinion justified, and it is supported by the judgment of Mr. Morley. I will only indicate two confirmatory lines of argument, on which I do not enter. The commercial and colonising interests in London were so strong that, if Cromwell's policy had been really favourable to them, it is inconceivable that the City men should have thwarted him so much, and been so ready to welcome back the Stuarts; the movement which culminated in the Restoration is utterly incomprehensible if it was rolling on and accumulating force in the teeth of

the economic interests of the nation. Once more, the extraordinary development which occurred in the last half of the seventeenth century has no direct connection with the lines of policy laid down by Cromwell. He was eager to oppose Spain; the course of progress which ultimately triumphed was inspired by jealousy of that trade with France which he had done so much to encourage.

So little evidence can be adduced in behalf of the view that Cromwell was keenly interested in colonial and commercial expansion, that it is worth while to enquire how the opinion should have arisen and obtained such general popularity in recent years. There is, of course, the antecedent probability that the typical strong man of the seventeenth century would have a part in the special development which characterised the England of that period. But there are other reasons; there can, I think, be no doubt that Cromwell was extraordinarily eager to obtain such conditions for the Jews that they might be attracted to settle in England, and his leanings to a commercial race have been interpreted as proving that he cherished commercial ambitions for his country. But his pro-Semitic bias is susceptible of a much simpler explanation; the chosen people appealed alike to his deepest sentiments and to his personal interests as Protector. The Jews were the victims of Spanish tyranny, and that would of itself constitute a claim to Cromwell's support. But besides this, the Government was in great want of money, and the wealthy Dutch Jews had plenty of money to lend. It had become a usual practice for Government to borrow in the ordinary course of affairs, but the system was not yet organised. There was no State Bank like that of Genoa, and the City magnates were in no hurry to come

forward and aid the Head of the Army by establishing one. There was an increasing difficulty in collecting taxes or obtaining supplies, and Cromwell was not unnaturally ready to curry favour with the Jews of Holland, and at least to divert them from lending assistance to the royalist cause. Spanish Crypto-Jews resident in London had already conferred a similar service on the Parliamentary party, and Cromwell's best chance of tiding over his pressing pecuniary difficulties lay in granting political status to and receiving help from the Jews. For his patronage of their forefathers succeeding generations of Jews have always been grateful, and their historians in the present day are ready to attribute to him the virtues they most admire and to paint him as a keen and far-seeing business man. He had so many activities that no two biographers are likely to lay stress on the same quality. Carlyle admired him as a great general, an autocrat with many statesmanlike powers, and a deeply religious man. It may be worth while to add that he showed business shrewdness in the practical matters, such as the draining of the fens, which fell within his own personal knowledge. It is, however, quite consistent with this view of his character to hold that when in power he seized the chance to make an attack on the political and religious system of Spain, without much regard to the injury thereby inflicted on the industrial and commercial classes. But to treat him as an ardent expansionist and to explain his action as due to economic aspirations, is to injure his reputation by injudicious praise, since this view of his conduct is likely to raise doubts both as to his common-sense and his sincerity. One panegyrist has written :

The statesmen of the Commonwealth, who knew so well how to conjure with

human enthusiasm, were essentially practical men. To imagine that they were the slaves of the great religious revival which had enabled them to overcome the loyalist inspiration of the cavaliers is entirely to misconceive their character and aims. The logical outcome of that revival, and of the triumph of the Puritan arms, would have been the Kingdom of Saints, but Cromwell's ambition aimed at something much more conventional. Imperial expansion and trade ascendancy filled a larger place in his mind than the Other-worldly inspirations which had carried him to power.<sup>1</sup>

I almost think that Oliver would have regarded the scurrility of royalist pamphleteers, who commented on his improved fortunes, as less offensive than the lavish praise of the enthusiasts of the twentieth century.

There are, moreover, political reasons which have rendered this strained interpretation of Cromwell's aims and character particularly attractive in the present day. The Anglo-Saxon race has entered, in both its leading branches, on a great era of expansion. Roosevelt in America and Rosebery in England are names that stand out in connection with the New Imperialism ; but there has been a difficulty in the matter. The Anglo-Saxon mind loves a precedent, and the political records on either side of the Atlantic yielded little that could be used by democrats in support of the new departure. Royalists and courtiers had been more commonly concerned in promoting expansion. Washington's charge to his nation seemed to exclude it altogether from American statesmanship, and the Liberal tradition told of much indifference to the colonies in the nineteenth century and no little jealousy of them in the eighteenth ; but it scarcely yielded a name that could be quoted as that of an enthusiast for expansion, till it was discovered that Cromwell could be used

<sup>1</sup> Wolf, *op. cit.* xxviii.

to fill the vacant niche and pose as the patron saint of Liberal Imperialism. He has served the purpose admirably; Lord Rosebery has unveiled his statue for the nation and President Roosevelt has written his life. Such appreciation is instructive; since it throws an interesting light on the views of the politicians who point to their hero as a model. Liberal Imperialism has been somewhat vague and ill-defined, and there is a satisfaction in getting a concrete presentment of the ideals of its leaders. Cromwell was before all else efficient; efficient in his organisation of the Army, efficient in his treatment of the Navy, and particularly efficient in his dealings with the native Irish. He had no patience with the inefficiency of his predecessors; they had attempted, in the plantation of Ireland, to introduce such an admixture of English inhabitants that civil order might be established and economic progress might become possible, without unnecessarily interfering with the old inhabitant. The Cromwellian method

of settlement was much simpler; the greater part of the native population was deported to the bleak area between the Shannon and the Galway coast, while large numbers were carried off to be employed in miserable servitude in Jamaica and the sugar plantations. It is easy enough to be efficient in such circumstances, but only if you are prepared to be utterly ruthless. At all events Cromwell had the courage of his opinions and was not satisfied to saunter along a primrose path; but the failure of his *régime* may give us pause. The problem of governing two races on the same soil is most likely to be solved by men who do not rely on heroic measures; they must be ready to learn by experience, and be on the alert to use such opportunities for improvement as occur. This was the course pursued by the Stuart kings, and the results of their rule contrast not unfavourably with the heritage of race-hatred which has associated itself with the name of Cromwell.

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